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**VANISHED CITIES OF  
NORTHERN AFRICA**

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The Theatre, Dougga.

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# VANISHED CITIES OF NORTHERN AFRICA

*By*

MRS. STEUART ERSKINE

*With 8 colour and 32 black-and-white illustrations by*

MAJOR BENTON FLETCHER

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## FOREWORD

I CANNOT let this book go to press without saying what a pleasure it is to me to be associated once more with Major Benton Fletcher, whose beautiful series of drawings illustrate with such truth and artistic feeling the places that I have tried to describe.

I must also testify to the courtesy with which we were treated by the Compagnie Transatlantique, and to the general excellence of the arrangements made for the comfort of those travelling under their flag. Thanks to the initiative of this company, places hitherto almost inaccessible can be visited by motor-car in comfort and security.

## NORTH WIND

When the wind is in the North,  
The sea is calm and the sky is blue,  
The sun is shining and the birds are singing,  
The world is full of life and joy.  
The wind is in the North,  
The sea is calm and the sky is blue,  
The sun is shining and the birds are singing,  
The world is full of life and joy.  
The wind is in the North,  
The sea is calm and the sky is blue,  
The sun is shining and the birds are singing,  
The world is full of life and joy.



# Vanished Cities of Northern Africa

## CHAPTER I

AL MOHRIB

As we sighted the coast of Northern Africa the sun rose unostentatiously and hung like a clear pale globe in a colourless sky. Before us Bizerta lay spread out, all set in formal squares like a child's toy town; Bizerta that has risen over the ashes of Hippo Diarrrythus, first of the vanished cities to salute us as we set foot on African soil.

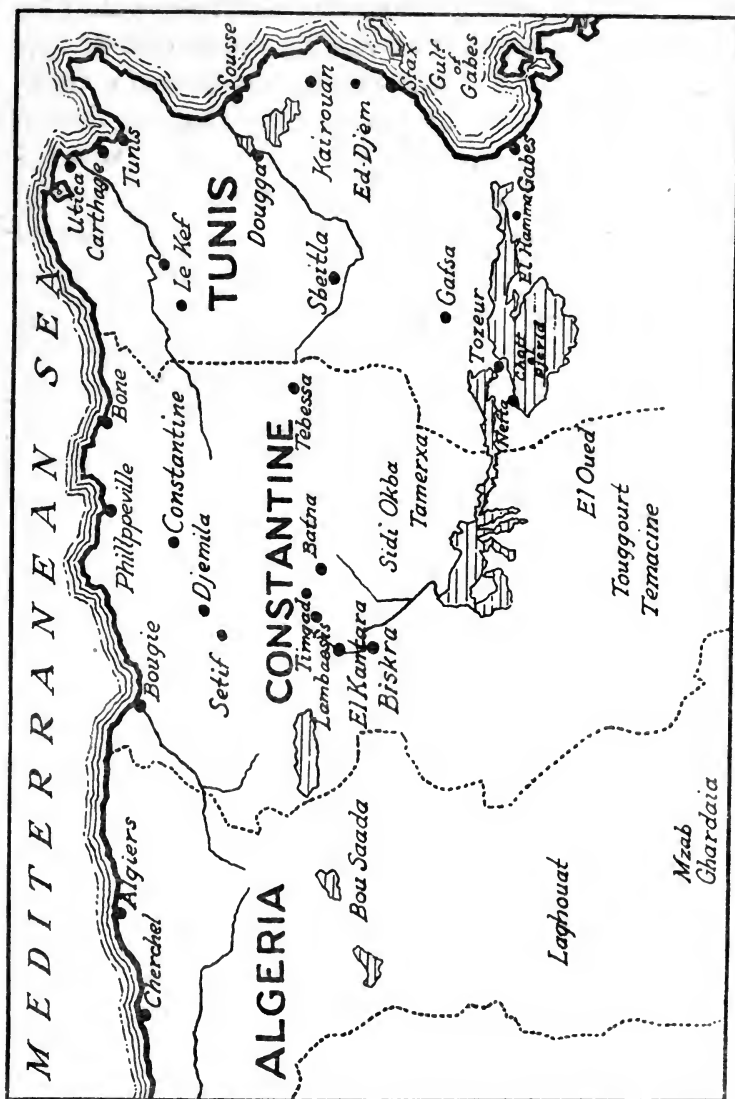
The sun rose higher in the pale sky as we took train for Tunis; the landscape seen from the windows was painted in tender shades of lavender and pale blue as regards the distant range of mountains, with a foreground of young green corn amongst which were masses of wild flowers. Poppies and yellow daisies and forget-me-nots for the most part, old friends all, they did not give the expected Eastern note, but rather intensified the impression that we had, by mistake, dropped into some fertile district in the Western Highlands of Scotland.

Was this really Africa? The very name spells colour and heat, tropical vegetation, jungles, adventures with wild beasts, and strings of camels crossing the vast steppes of the Sahara. A vision of Port Said seen from the sea, all cerulean blue melting into a golden haze, absolutely exuding heat, rose before my eyes in contrast to the scene before us.

We passed through marshy land and by still water and then, by degrees, the Eastern note suggested itself by here a hedge of cactus and there a procession of dark-skinned, white-robed men astride their small native donkeys. We were already on historic ground, for the cornfields through which we were passing had supplied the Roman granaries, and the great broken arches of an aqueduct reminded us that we were in a land strewn with Roman remains. Between us and the sea—four miles inland now—lies Utica, deep-buried under the modern Bou Chater, Utica that was a flourishing seaport three thousand years ago and the first Phœnician station to be founded in Africa. Between Utica and the White City of Tunis, for which we are bound, is the site of Karthage.

It is, after all, not so very remarkable a fact that this Northern shore of Africa should bear some resemblance to Europe. It is very often said that the country that now lies between the Western basin of the Mediterranean and the Sahara was once a promontory connected with Europe at the Straits of Gibraltar lying between the inland sea and the great Salt Sea of the Sahara. This sea gradually dried up, leaving behind it the *chotts*, the dried-up salt lakes of the desert, as well as many traces of the original submerged state of all that region. At any rate there is abundant evidence that the Sahara region once enjoyed a damper, milder climate, and the megalithic remains that are so constantly found prove that it was once extensively inhabited.

As the train steams slowly on towards Tunis, the beauty and fertility of the country is very striking,



and it is easy to realise how tempting a bait it proved to the nations of old. The situation was exposed, it lay within easy reach of other Mediterranean countries, it was inhabited before the Phœnicians came by tribes who had no central organisation, no flag, not even a definite name as a nation. And so it happened that one civilisation after another was imposed on the country, one city built over its predecessor out of the old materials, until there came the last great sweeping destruction that left little but the ruins of old magnificence.

It is a wonderful history that has often been told. We find it in the classics, in the works of the Arabic geographers and historians, in modern histories and in the quantity of monographs and articles that deal with the subject from the archæological point of view. The French occupation of Algeria, and their protectorate over Tunisia and Morocco, have naturally intensified their interest in the colonising work achieved by their great predecessors the Romans. From some of these writers we get a synthetic history of the whole period during which the Latin cities rose and fell, as well as intimate touches, the result of some special study, bringing to light a forgotten episode or showing an historical figure in a new light. It is only through omnivorous reading that we can get any clear idea of African history, and even then we find many periods quite unchronicled. But what a strange and fascinating history it is.

It begins with the peaceful invasion of the Phœnicians who planted their trading stations along the coast, living in a friendly fashion with the Berbers ;

then Karthage, part Phœnician, part African, rose to greatness and was destroyed by Rome. Rome gradually took possession of the land, built great cities, threw roads across the desert, declined in power, and was eventually overcome by the Vandals, who, in their turn, were ousted by the forces of the Eastern Empire. Christianity flourished for nearly a hundred years, and then the Arabs arrived on the scene soon after the death of Mohammed, to be followed by Turks and Barbary Corsairs, who kept Europe in terror until the beginning of the nineteenth century. With the French occupation, a new era arose. Such, very baldly, is the history of Northern Africa in a nutshell.

The Berbers were, as far as we know, the original inhabitants of the country. Though they rose to considerable power at times, and, with the Arabs, ruled over Spain for centuries, they were prevented by their jealousies from combining to form a great empire.

Who were the Berbers? Were they "indigenous to the soil," or did they come from Asia? Were they descended from Noah or were they the remnant that escaped from the catastrophe that overwhelmed Atlantis? There are many theories on the subject. It has been suggested that the race was crossed by a fairer stock at some remote period, and if we cannot accept the version quoted by Sallust concerning the disbanded army of Herakles, we may at least believe that he based his legend on something stable, such as the great migration of peoples that took place about 1600 B.C. However that may be, there are tall, fair Berbers to be found in certain regions, and there is

the more general well-set-up dark type that we meet in the Kabyle mountains and the desert.

The name Berber is not devised from the contemptuous epithet of Barbarian ; it is a name the origin of which is not clear ; all that it is important to remember is that when we read of the Getulæ and the Libyans, of the Numidians and the Moors, we are reading of the original people whom the Arabs named Kabyles, because they lived in tribes, and whom we speak of under the generic term of the Berbers. The most curious feature of this people is certainly persistency. One great civilisation after another has been swept away, but still the Berbers, who were there when the first settlers landed on the shore, live in villages often built over the ruins of the more powerful nations, speaking the same language that they spoke three thousand years ago and having an alphabet peculiar to themselves.

With some such thoughts as these in our minds we pass through the marshy wastes of the lower Medjerda, the Bagradas of the ancients, a river that rises south-west of Suq Ahras in Algeria, and which used to have its mouth at Cape Karthage, but which now finds an outlet above Utica. It is the Medjerda which is largely responsible for the decay of Utica, its altered course having silted up the harbour and so destroyed its commerce.

Utica was founded by the Tyrians about 1200 B.C., as a trading centre ; it was, for some time, the only one on the coast, and it increased in importance as the natives found out the advantages to be derived from a superior civilisation. These *comptoirs* of the



Phœnicians were very simple affairs at the start. They consisted of magazines in which to store their wares, houses for the handful of men who conducted the business, and a fort to protect them. To these were added a market, and of course a temple, in which were worshipped the cruel Canaanite God Baal and his gentler helpmate Tanit, the "countenance of Baal" and other deities adored by the Phœnicians.

The earliest settlements after Utica were Hippo Diarrythus, Iol, Hasdrumet, Tingas, and Tunes—the modern Bizerta, Cherchel, Susa, Tangier and Tunis. In each of these, development proceeded along the same lines. The natives, attracted by the wares of the wily merchants in which the useful and the ornamental were cleverly blended, came to buy or charter their products against the delightful things that had all the charm of novelty for people living in a state of semi-barbarism. After a time they built huts round the settlements, partly, no doubt, to profit by the protection afforded by the fort, and they ended by working for the newcomers.

It has been pointed out more than once that the Phœnicians only sent a handful of men to supervise the business, and that they must have employed native labour to load and unload their argosies, as well as to conduct the caravans which began to make their slow way across the interior of the country. The Berbers were an intensely strong, hardy race; they died in battle or from the attack of some wild animal; seldom from any illness. They were willing and patient, and they kept a word once given; at least, that is the character given them in after-times by the Romans.

It is hard to see what intermixture of blood took place ; how far the Karthaginians, for instance, were Phœnician and how far African. In the less important colonies it was probably not very considerable, as the number of men sent from the mother cities was so small, according to recent writers ; but in Karthage, where a good many emigrants took up their abode when the star of Tyr was fading and that of the Punic city was rising, the Phœnician element was stronger.

Al Moghrib, as the Arabs called Northern Africa, was a name signifying the West—the western land coming from the desert, the land beyond which the sun died every day in the sea to be born again next morning in the east ; Morocco was the farthest West—Moghrib-al-Aksa. With Moghrib-al-Aksa we have nothing to do at present, having only too many places of note to visit while confining ourselves to the vanished cities of Algeria and Tunisia. It is not possible to see all of these, and it is quite impossible to keep up with the archæologists who are bringing to light new treasures as the excavations progress. A recent work by Count Prohuc gives an interesting account of his discoveries on the site of the Temple of Tanit ; the excellent work of the Service des Monuments Historiques continues quietly and methodically, unearthing bit by bit, stone by stone, those golden cities of Latin Africa that have come to rival Pompeii. It would be useless to chronicle all the latest discoveries, which must be told by an expert into the bargain ; the object of this study is to dig up the old stories that people the silent streets, to bring back, in some measure, the atmosphere and the life of the past ages. In

doing so, much that is interesting historically has to be passed by, and much beautiful scenery neglected. It is a country well worth visiting, and not yet overrun by tourists. Up in the Atlas mountains, among the Kabyle villages, as well as in the Tell or the Sahel—the country bordering the mountains or that lying along the seashore—there are things new and fascinating to beguile the most jaded mind ; on beyond the chain of mountains lies the great expanse of the Sahara, which must ever remain a land of mysterious peace to the modern pilgrim, wearied by the ceaseless bustle of the life we most of us live, whether we like it or no.

But the train is approaching the white city—Tunis the White—and before we know where we are it has drawn up in the station. The rather oppressive feeling that there is too much to be seen and too many sights that must necessarily be left unseen, gives way to a memory of a saying of the poet-painter Fromentin, who wrote so charmingly of things observed during his long stay in the country—concerning the advisability of seeing only a little and seeing it well.

## CHAPTER II

### TUNIS

TUNIS the White, the City of the Beys, picturesquely situated on the gulf that bears its name, is usually represented as glowing in the sunshine—that African sunshine about which one hears so much. It is a place that cries aloud for sunshine and blue skies, and the gloomy, gusty weather that obtained early in April in the year of grace 1926 was not calculated to show it at its best.

The truth had better be faced. Let us say once and for all that the climate of this part of Tunisia is often treacherous. The weather can be delightful, but it is often much the reverse, as any record will show. The fate of a battle has been more than once decided by furious gales off the eastern coast, and several varieties of wind are named after the victim or the event. The modern town has little to recommend it beyond the wide Avenue Jules Ferry, with its triple walks bordered by tall trees, and the beautiful Belvedere, with its superb views over the bay ; the charm of Tunis lies in the Arab town, and in the beautiful country that surrounds it. The town itself is rather featureless, and wants that sparkling sunshine that makes one forget and forgive, and even the Arab town loses when there is no sudden shaft of sunlight at a crossing of the Suqs, or some sudden lozenge of light piercing the open-work in the roof.



*Barbier H. 10. 10. 10.*

THE SHOE SUQ, TUNIS.





The French are much to be congratulated in that they have kept the two cities quite separate. The Arab Medina is quite unspoiled, and the charm is upon one almost as soon as one passes through the Porte de France and enters the narrow streets that lead to the enclosed city. Here, if anywhere, will be found traces of the vanished Phœnician, Roman, Spanish, Arab, and Turkish dwellings ; but the few remains are hard indeed to find, and will take more than a passing glance to discover.

Let us walk up the Rue de l'Église towards the centre of the town, leaving the fascinating shops in the Suq to another time, when the old stories of the past do not preoccupy our minds. The Suq is well worth many a visit, for it is one of the finest known, and the picturesque costumes and the whole Eastern flavour make it a thing of joy. Hours fly when wandering about its narrow ways, examining the stuffs and the scents and the saddles, and watching busy workers do marvels with the needle, holding the other end of the thread hitched on to the toe, or working at the immemorial loom.

Perhaps the best way to get a general idea of Tunis is to visit the Dar-al-Bey, the Bey's Palace in the centre of the Medina, standing near the Great Mosque, the tall minaret of which, with its lacework of stone, was rebuilt as recently as 1894. The Dar-al-Bey itself is charming. We see here arcaded courtyards with slender pillars, and rooms in which Persian tiles and coffered ceilings were executed at the close of the eighteenth century. The alternate blocks of black and white stone in the archways were copied

from the Turks, the coffered ceilings from the Moors who returned from Spain. Artists and craftsmen from Morocco, heirs of the Andalusian tradition, have been much employed in Tunis from early times up to the nineteenth century, when a Moroccan artist, who was on his way to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage, was stopped by the powerful Minister of that date and ordered to decorate the vault of the tomb of Sidi Brahim-ar-Rihai.

After walking through the State rooms and seeing the worst period of nineteenth-century decoration in some of them, the terrace on the roof is visited to admire the view. It is, indeed, a very wonderful one that remains long in the memory.

The flat, white roofs, the domes, and the minarets of Tunis lie below us, extending right up to the expanse of the bay. Beneath us lies the mass of the Great Mosque with its extensive buildings, including the Muslim University and the library; near by the graceful minarets of Sidi Youssef and Sidi Ben Arous cut the sky-line. To the right is the fine silhouette of the Djebel Bou Kornein, and to the left, beyond the expanse of the waters of the bay, we see a headland at the foot of which the light catches two sheets of water, one circular, the other straight. There is no mistake about it. The headland and the still water represent the glories of ancient Karthage; we are looking at the site of one of the greatest tragedies in history, one that cannot fail to give a quickening of the pulse to anyone who is at all sensitive. Irrespective of the local interest, we have a grand panorama spread before our eyes.

From this point of vantage a good general idea of the Great Mosque can be obtained. It is unfortunate that it cannot be visited, as we should find many a column stolen from Karthage which once may have adorned a temple, and Byzantine capitals from the same source which were probably taken from a Christian church. As far as the general plan goes, it is the same as that adopted at Qāirowan, Gafa, and Mahdia, consisting of a great courtyard surrounded by colonnades, at one end of which is the prayer-room. The central aisle of this building is higher than the others; the columns supporting the roof are antique, many of the capitals being in the Greek style of the later Punic epoch. In the smaller door, giving to the street, can be observed a frame formed of three fragments of a Corinthian frieze, which is noticed by M. H. Saladin as being of very fine workmanship, though spoiled by being plastered over with whitewash.

The Djama-az-Zitouna, the Mosque of the Olive, was founded in 723 by Obeid Allah Ibn-al-Habhab; the greater part of the present building dates from the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries of our era. The Mosque of the Qasba, so simple, with its square minaret and its Cufic inscription on the outer wall, dates from the thirteenth century. At the gate the sand-diviners sit, each with a flat tray of sand and each with a terribly attractive-looking book, which is consulted when any knotty point is at issue. But that is a detail that we cannot see from a height.

Having admired the view, and having been shown an unfortunate camel turning a water-wheel in a prehistoric manner, just by the side of the Bey's

house, we go downstairs to the entrance-hall, where we must once more take M. Saladin for our guide. This distinguished archæologist, who has written much concerning Roman Africa, has here made a very interesting discovery. He points out that there are several archways at the beginning and end of the passage that leads to the patio which are enclosed in Arabic masonry and covered with whitewash, but which are totally distinct from the main fabric of the house. They are of the Doric style of architecture, and were erected in the Roman period ; consequently they must have belonged to some antique building. Taking into consideration the lie of the ground, M. Saladin thinks that they formed part of a theatre, built, according to Greek fashion adopted by the Romans, on the side of a hill. Roman remains are so scarce in Tunis that the suggestion is valuable, and one might add that Doric architecture, so often found in Sicily, was almost unknown in Africa.

The Bey's house therefore, so interesting in itself, stands probably on the site of a Roman theatre, as it does certainly on that of the palace that Ziadib-Allah II, al Aghlab, built in the tenth century when he fixed his Court at Tunis. The Aghlabite rulers were great patrons of art, and have left behind them a reputation for ostentation and luxurious living, which was specially noticeable in the Bey Ibrahim-al-Aghlab, he who received the ambassadors of foreign countries in such state that he was known as the Louis XIV of Tunisia.

After leaving the Bey's house, we may wander through the Suq, looking out for antique columns



*Bentley's Illustrations.*

THE STREET OF PALACES, THE MEDINA, TUNIS.



embedded in Arabic masonry and for any fragments that have been recklessly divorced from their natural surroundings and utilised in this manner. We may admire the picturesque, twisted columns, painted red and green, in the shoe Suk, the fragment of a classical colonnade, or the deserted slave-market ; or, again, we may find ourselves suddenly looking up at tall houses with imposing entrances and *rejas* that remind one of Spain. These are the houses originally owned by the rich Moors who had to flee from Andalusia, and still bear the names Rue de Riche and Rue de l'Andalous. The exiles from Spain never forgot their homes in Seville and Granada, and many of them preserved the great keys of their dwellings in the hope that they might some day return to unlock their doors. Some of the doors, painted blue and green and studded with huge nails, have curious knockers.

One of the most attractive corners of the Medina is the little space in front of the Sadiki Hospital, on the steps of which a group of patients, in their classic garments, may often be found waiting their turn. From the hospital gate there is a view of a tall cypress, laden to the top with a cascade of royal purple bougainvillea, which hangs over the twisted and gnarled branch of a vine ; in the background, beyond the arch that leads back to the Suk, rises the graceful minaret of Hammouda Pasha. Anyone desirous of entering the hospital and penetrating into the garden, as well as entering—in the spirit—through the closed doors of the private houses in the Medina, will do well to read Miriam Harry's *Tunis la Blanche*. This writer appears to have had an inside acquaintance with the domestic

life of the dwellers in the Arab city, and her pictures are most vividly drawn. The atmosphere of the *Arabian Nights* is here, contrasting in a most amusing manner with my own sober experiences in Trans-Jordan.

We leave the Medina regretfully, and are once more in the long avenue with the shady walks and the group of tall palm-trees shivering in the breeze. Children and nurses, French soldiers in the picturesque Zouave uniform of wide trousers and jaunty sky-blue jacket, tall, coal-black Senegalese soldiers in their neat uniform, Tirailleurs and Chasseurs d'Afrique, Arabs in white draperies, Jewesses in gaudy colours, Muslim women with tight black veils stretched over pale faces, Europeans of many nationalities—all these different types make the animated scene interesting. A cosmopolitan crowd, typical of the different peoples that have drifted through Tunis.

The early history of Tunis can be compressed into a nutshell, so little is known of it, and of so little importance was the place which is now the capital of Tunisia.

Founded by the Phœnicians in the early days, it was the predecessor—and not the successor, as has been said—of Karthage. The situation on the bay, which gave a fine natural harbour to the new town, was excellent, but the bay was then called Sinus Uticensis, and the newcomer was a long time before it acquired a predominant position among the Phœnician colonies.

Tunes, as it was called, was strongly fortified by the Phœnicians, who had learnt the art of fortification, as well as that of storing water in great cisterns, from their ancestors the Canaanites: nevertheless, it was



often taken by assault during the course of its existence. The Berbers took it in 395 B.C., but could not keep it; in 319 B.C. Agathocles, the tyrant of Syracuse, established his headquarters here when he invaded Africa. This ambitious prince wanted to found an empire in which the Karthaginians were to have no part. Mainly to get them out of Sicily, he attacked them at home, but had eventually to evacuate his African possessions in such a hurry that he left his children in Tunis in the charge of the garrison. The garrison murdered the children and made their own terms with the Karthaginians, who then became the owners of Tunis.

Tunis suffered during the Punic Wars, and was taken by the Mercenaries when they revolted against the Karthaginians. After the destruction of Karthage, we learn from Léon l'Africain, Tunis became a city of refuge, and enjoyed a season of prosperity brought about by the misfortunes of its great rival.

If the early history of Tunis is difficult to unravel because of the scantiness of the material, the history of the Middle Ages is just the reverse. During the Middle Ages the story of Tunis is that of the turbulent times in which the various Berber dynasties were in the ascendant; beginning with the sixteenth century and lasting right up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, it remained the stronghold of the Barbary Corsairs. To deal with so vast a period is quite outside the scope of these vagrant studies of vanished cities.

The great feature of Tunis—its greatest asset—is always the bay, and it is by their navies that we find those in authority making their power felt, whether

legitimately or otherwise. This being the case, it is well to direct our steps to the scene of action.

The tram which passes La Goulette, on its way to Karthage and La Marsa, starts in the Avenue Jules Ferry, passes through the square of the same name, and is very soon down by the docks. The tram-line is then laid along the northern bank of a canal that cuts right across the shallow waters of the lake to the narrow neck of land still known as La Goulette, the throat, in memory of the outlet into the open sea and the various forts that were placed there in its defence. The view of the bay that is obtained from the tram is fairly extensive, and, at certain seasons of the year, is enlivened by flocks of rose-coloured flamingoes that haunt the shallower lagoons.

It is not surprising to learn that the rulers of Tunis—whether kings, princes, khalifs, beys, or Barbary Corsairs—made full use of this fine harbour. The Aghlabite princes, during whose rule Tunis prospered greatly, founded one of those loosely connected empires that dissolved as easily as they had been built up; and it was from Tunis that they set out in their galleys to conquer Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. These princes removed their Court from Qaïrowan just as, at an earlier date, the Muslim conqueror Oqbar Ben Nabi had removed his from Tunis to his new city of Qaïrowan.

At the end of the twelfth century the last king of Tunis called in Abd-al-Moumen, the great general who founded the Almohade dynasty, to help him against the Almoravides. It is difficult to touch, however lightly, on this curious page of history without reminding ourselves of the main issue.

The Empire of the Almoravides—which comprised Northern Africa, the greater part of Spain, and the Balearic Isles—was founded by nomad tribes of the Sahara inhabiting that part of the desert that is south of modern Algeria and Morocco. They arrived in Spain at a time of great literary and artistic achievement, learnt much from the conquered people, and, in the end, became enervated and decadent. Then other tribes appeared from the Moroccan Atlas Mountains—sedentary tribes this time, rising at the bidding of their Mahdi to wage a religious war on Christians and heretic Muslims alike. The Almoravides believed in a personal God ; the Almohades declared Him to be pure spirit. Probably the incentive lay on another plane, for the Almohades snatched the empire from the Almoravides, and finally followed them into decadence.

With all this chapter of history, which offers many amusing by-paths to the student, Tunis had to do. Fleets were anchored in her harbour, which went out on to the high seas to fight or to plunder. The Fatimite khalifs had a fleet of two hundred ships moored in the harbour, and each successive ruler found in the navy his best arm of defence as well as of offence.

The relations between the princes of Tunis and the great European Powers were, on the whole, quite friendly, but, with the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was a great change apparent. Early in the century two galliots appeared in the Bay of Tunis, and the captain (*raïs*) of one of them came ashore, and asked for an audience with the King of Tunis, a prince of the Hafside dynasty. The newcomer

was a big man with a flaming red beard, and he must have had a persuasive manner, for he succeeded in making an arrangement which he protested would be equally advantageous to the King and to himself. The favour that he asked was that of permission to use the harbour for his ships ; in return for hospitality he offered a fifth part of whatever booty he picked up. It was not long before the delighted Tunisians saw Barbarossa's ships, richly laden, arrive in the harbour.

Captain Uruj Barbarossa and his brother, Kheir-ed-Dhin, are among the heroic figures of the time ; however coldly we may look on their profession of sea-robbers, we cannot withhold our unwilling admiration when their achievements are considered. Uruj and Kheir-ed-Dhin Barbarossa, sons of a Sipahi soldier in the island of Lesbos, built up their career out of nothing but sheer pluck and persistence. Hearing of the success of Barbary pirates, they resolved to do likewise, and only waited until Uruj became *raïs* of a galliot to start on the adventure. Here, in the Bay of Tunis, we can see the bold, bad pirates, their red beards aflame in the sunshine, standing on the deck of a galley manned by Christian slaves chained to the oar, followed by other ships towing in the booty.

This state of affairs grew worse after Kheir-ed-Dhin took Tunis definitely in 1533 ; the White City became a perfect nest of robbers, to which was added, after the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, a quantity of embittered men ready to do any desperate deed to humiliate the Spaniards. The Mediterranean Sea was infested with pirates lying in wait for treasure ships from the New World and merchantmen from the old,



*Paul Huet*

POTTERY SHOP, TUNIS.



and the scandal increased now that the African ports were in the hands of the bandits. There had been piracy on a private scale before they came, but now it was an organised profession, and the only way to escape the attentions of the gentleman of the sea was to pay tribute.

Tunis was not long in the possession of the Barbarossa brothers, as the banished King appealed to the Emperor Charles V, and that monarch, who was much harassed by the Corsairs, set sail himself in 1535, with six hundred ships under the command of Andrea Doria. In June the armada was sighted, and it was not long before a determined attack was made on the Goulette, the tongue of land that had then two towers, a mile apart, guarding the narrow channel. Kheir-ed-Dhin Barbarossa had nominally ten thousand troops, but a thousand Christian slaves revolted because they would not fight against their co-religionists, and the Berber troops were partially disaffected. On the 14th of July the Knights of Malta took the Goulette forts, and Kheir-ed-Dhin was driven into Tunis, whence he escaped to join his brother.

Charles gave his troops free licence to sack Tunis for three days, and the city was the scene of terrible carnage and indiscriminate looting. When he left he made a compact with the reinstated king, one of the points being that piracy was to be abolished. He then sailed away, and clever fingers recorded his victory in one of the great tapestries that are the glory of the Royal Palace at Madrid.

The Spaniards built a fort on the neck of sand that lies between the lake and the sea, and it is still to be

seen there, with some additions made during the Turkish occupation. It was strongly fortified, but it was taken in 1569 by the Beglerbeg of Algiers; retaken and refortified by Don Juan of Austria after the Battle of Lepanto; taken again in the following year by the Turks after a long siege in which the Spanish garrison performed prodigies of valour and sold their lives dearly in the end. The fort, which is still, I believe, used as a prison, was the one in which St. Vincent de Paul was confined in the seventeenth century.

Traces of the triple wall which once enclosed the enceinte are still to be seen in the old town of La Goulette, and when one of these was cut through, some years ago, about two hundred skeletons, together with weapons, cannon-balls and Spanish coins, were unearthed—melancholy evidence as to the truth of the old chronicler's accounts of the hand-to-hand fights that were fought out on this narrow strip of land.

In 1541 Charles set out to make another effort to sweep the pirates from the face of the earth; but that adventure belongs to the story of Algiers.

Before leaving Tunis, and, if possible, after seeing Karthage, several visits must be paid to the Alaoui Museum in the Bardo Palace. It is the most important collection in Northern Africa.

A great mass of buildings grouped within a walled enceinte, a couple of kilometres outside the town, once formed the Palace of the Bardo; successive Beys had added to the buildings, many of which were in a ruinous condition. The French pulled down the



walls and some of the buildings, leaving the present palace with the old hareem, and converting part of the space into a public garden. The present building has an imposing flight of steps, with sculptured white marble lions on the balustrade, leading to the apartments of the Bey, and the rooms in which the collection is housed are grouped round an old patio.

On the ground floor are Punic, Lybic, and Roman antiquities of great interest, with statues found in various parts of Roman Africa; on the first floor are some wonderful mosaics, some of which throw sidelights on to contemporary manners and customs. Statues are here from the theatre in Karthage, from Dougga, from Thuburbo Major, from many of the places that we are to visit; and then, suddenly, we are in a different world. Four rooms are filled with Greek statues, as different from the Roman replicas or originals or the copies by Africans which we have been seeing up to now as it is possible to imagine. Some of the bronzes are in perfect condition; there are also stone and marble fragments with a curious spongy texture, some being almost eaten away and obliterated. The riddle is explained when we learn that a ship full of statuary from Greece—destination unknown, but probably, as has been suggested, that of Rome—was wrecked off Mahdia, on that treacherous coast where so many ships have foundered. This ship sank in the first century B.C., and the works of art—some of them of great beauty—remained at the bottom of the sea until some men who were fishing for sponges in 1907 brought up one of these fragments. Between 1907 and 1913 the precious cargo was

recovered, and is now very well arranged in the Museum. A beautiful little bronze Eros, with his hand to his head, and a running Satyr are among the treasures of the collection, and the refined head of Dionysius, signed by the sculptor Boethos. Besides statuary there were building materials and furniture, several pieces of which are to be seen here. Among the smaller figures are some clever grotesques; the dancing dwarfs remind one curiously of the dwarfs painted by Velazquez.

The Arabic collection is of considerable interest; it is housed in the oldest part of the palace, and has the advantage of a perfectly harmonious setting.

Time need never hang heavy on the hands in Tunis. Visits to Karthage and to some of the Roman cities which are within easy reach now that motoring has made these expeditions easy, fill the days, and, if an unoccupied afternoon be found, it can be employed most pleasantly by taking a car or the tram to Sidi Bou Said. In this beauty spot the villas, their gardens aglow with bougainvillea and roses and geraniums, hanging over the purple sea, are some of them typical of the East in their architecture. One that I can think of is like a dream of the Alhambra. And up above the villas we have the Arab village, with its mosque and its picturesque native café. But, in the end, most of us drift back to the Tunis Suq, and the last walk that I had there remains very vividly in my mind.

It was in the evening, after the bustle of the day was over. The owners of the little cubby-holes in which they keep their fascinating wares were, many

of them, still sitting among their carpets and pottery, their leather and hammered brass-work. They did this not so much in the hopes of catching a belated tourist as from force of habit. The Suq is not only a place of buying and selling ; it is a place of friendly intercourse and of contemplation. Some of the shops were almost in darkness, some were brightly lit up. The real life of the Suq was being carried on quietly in the magic hour when evening was coming on apace and night was not far off.

It was a golden evening, after one of the rare, perfect days ; the dying sun sent an after-glow that warmed the shadows looking eastwards, while they were blue and cold towards the west—golden, unforgettable evening when mysterious shadows fell on the tall houses in the Rue de l'Andalous and faint lights filtered through the iron gratings that barred the windows.

Returning down the now almost deserted Suq, it was a study in whites ; arch within arch, each different in a subtle way, exquisite variations of tone, pale lights, the white dress of an Arab, standing like a statue, making yet another note in the scale. A last vision, as evening fell, of Tunis, the White City of the Beys.

## CHAPTER III

### KARTHAGE

A STRETCH of blue water with streaks of peacock green and purple on its tranquil surface, lying between the nearer green shore and the distant violet mountains, such is the view that meets our eyes when we have climbed to the summit of the old citadel of Karthage. Down to the right the two pieces of water, circular and straight, represent the old ports, while dotted about are little modern villas ; and the tram-line runs below on its way to La Marsa.

It is very disappointing. There are remains of the great past to be found, it is true, but they are very poor compared to the treasures excavated in the Roman cities inland, disappointingly poor considering what might have been if the Vandals and others had not destroyed almost every vestige of the Roman city, and if everyone who wanted building material had not used Karthage as a quarry.

But the place was cursed after the city was destroyed, and although the Romans rebuilt it in spite of their curse, the curse outlasted them and destroyed their own handiwork. And over all the site of vanished Karthage, where so many great events have taken place, where a nation has risen to riches and fame and has contended for the empire of the world and has fallen more completely than nation ever fell before or since, there broods a cold, indifferent peace.



The Harbours, Karthage.



The view from the Byrsa is very extensive. Conspicuous among the mountains over the water rise the cleft peaks of Djebel Bou Kornein, the Father of Two Horns, as the Arabs say ; up on the summit a temple to Baal was erected in the old days. On the nearer shore we see the long tongue of land running to La Goulette, and beyond it is Tunis ; to the left the land dips down and rises, falls again and rises to Cape Karthage, on which the white houses of Sidi Bou Said shine in the sun.

We are standing on what was once the citadel hill of Karthage, which is now crowned by the cathedral dedicated to St. Louis of France, who died here a victim to the plague, at the very outset of his crusade.

The White Fathers of the Desert have their habitation here, and the museum, in which is stored many of the treasures that they have excavated. Looking down from this height we can pick out places with names which are memorable, but we seldom find traces of the flight of time. It is a case of association of ideas rather than of realisation.

Out there, where the coast-line projects a little, we see Bordj Djedid, where traces have actually been found of the original Phœnician settlement, founded by the Sidonians something under three thousand years ago. The merchants of Sidon called their station Cambe and intended it to be the rival of the flourishing city of Utica, founded by their rivals in trade, the Tyrians.

Some hundreds of years after this event, about 800 B.C., a party of Tyrians led by a princess whose name was Elissar, but who was afterwards known as Dido, the fugitive, landed near Utica, on the look-out for

a suitable site. The Princess bought the land on the hill overlooking Cambe and built a town there which she called Kart Hadash, the New Town. It has been suggested that she meant this to be in contradistinction to the mother city, Tyre, or, more reasonably, to Utica, "Outik," the old city. It does not seem to have been suggested, but it may be worth a passing thought, that the new city on the hill was to be distinguished from the old town by the shore, which must, by then, have arrived at some importance or it would not have lasted so long. Just as Neapolis, the New City, absorbed the older foundation, so Kart Hadash may have absorbed the older Phœnician settlement.

We are now on very thin ice. We can accept Dido, whose real name was Eliza, or something like it, as an historical personage ; most writers do, and we must admit that if she fled from Tyre on account of a plebeian rising against patricians, or for any other motive, the most likely place for her to choose as a new home would be the African coast. It was not only fertile and desirable as a country, it was a land already colonised by her compatriots. To those of us who have looked on the story of Dido founding Karthage as a legend, it may seem surprising to find it treated as sober fact ; but then, we must admit, the modern historical critics are sometimes rather unexpected. We may come from a perusal of the latest work clutching at some cherished illusion that has been half-blown away by an icy breath. "Pooh !" the critic will have remarked caustically, "Oriental mirage !" On the other hand we may find that the



latest researches have proved that some story, thought to be legendary, is founded on fact. Historical studies are no longer conducted along the same lines ; they are carried farther and farther back by the labours of archæologists and students so that perhaps, some day, we may even know a little about the Karthaginians.

But to return to Dido. We may sit and muse over Karthage, its rise to fame, its fall, its distinguished citizens ; we may talk of the great Barca family, of the Scipios, of Marius sitting among the ruins of Karthage, of Julius Cæsar, of Augustine, but we inevitably come back to one of the most unsatisfactory love-stories which was, nevertheless, one of the great love-stories of the ancient world, that of Dido and Æneas.

The story, as Virgil told it, is so well known that many of us have forgotten it. He tells us how Æneas and his followers fled from burning Troy, of their landing on the coast of Africa, and their approaching a new city, on the walls of which the workmen were still busy. The wanderers climb the hill and are hospitably received by the Queen, who presses them to leave their ships and settle in Kart Hadash.

Virgil's Dido is the most generous and magnificent creature, pouring out her sympathy and her gifts without stint, but she is like other people, she wants something in return. She is madly in love with the indifferent Æneas, and breaks her heart when, recalled to his duties by Mercury, he sails away to fulfil his destiny. Then Dido mounts the funeral pyre "with furious haste" and ends her life on the summit of Byrsa.

Virgil wrote the Æneid at a time when the bitter memories of the Punic Wars had been softened by

time ; he wrote when Augustus was intending to follow up Julius Cæsar's instructions as to the rebuilding of Karthage. He chose his subject with the deliberate intention of writing round it an epic poem glorifying the young Augustus. Augustus, who descended, so the Cæsars claimed, from Æneas of Troy, was typified by that unpleasant hero, just as Dido personified Karthage, and was also Cleopatra, from whose wiles Æneas, more astute than Anthony or even Julius Cæsar, extricated himself to found the Roman world.

Virgil does not give us any picture of Karthage that helps us to visualise the place. He talks of the busy workmen, he describes a magnificent temple on the walls of which were frescoes or mosaics representing the siege of Troy, a decoration quite unsuited to the place, and one which could not have been executed in the Karthage of that date. His Æneas, who had to be kept well in hand with a view to his typifying Augustus, sails away as the smoke from Dido's funeral pyre mounts up into the still air ; he sees her again in the under-world, and actually sheds a tear, symbolic, perhaps, of the rebuilding of the city that she represents.

Most people decline to believe that Dido and Æneas ever met, for the surely rather sound reason that they lived centuries apart ; St. Augustine was exercised about this very point, as he tells us in his *Confessions*. When he was a young man, studying in Karthage, he used to ask ignorant people if Æneas had ever visited Karthage, to which they would reply that they did not know ; when he asked the learned the same

question, they replied in the negative. The Saint's comment on tears that he had shed over a tragedy that never took place was that education is conducted on wrong lines. A remark that has often been made since and may very likely have been made before his time.

The historic Dido, who founded the Upper City that was known as the Byrsa, from a Phœnician word signifying fortress, which has no connection with the old legend of the ox-hide, is said to have committed suicide to escape the unwelcome attentions of the King of the Getulæ, who wished to make her his wife ; so that she had an heroic end whichever story you prefer.

Her city prospered exceedingly and became rich beyond the dreams of avarice ; the population, part Phœnician and part Libyan, were born sailors, who obtained almost the monopoly of the high seas. As Karthage increased in size and acquired new territory, a boundary dispute arose that was settled in a manner that is surely unique. The Greek colony of Cyrene and Karthage agreed each to send out a couple of runners, the spot where the runners met to be the boundary between the two States. Karthage sent out two brothers, famous athletes, named Philenus, who outran the Cyreneans and placed the boundary far down the eastern coast beyond the Greater Syrtes. The Cyreneans protested that they had not played fair ; the Karthaginians stood firm. Then the Cyreneans said that if the brothers consented to be buried alive on the spot, the boundary should remain there. To their surprise the heroic couple agreed

and remained quietly on the spot they had reached while the horrid deed was done. A legend, probably, but the place was afterwards known as *Aræ Philanorum*, and it remained the boundary between the States of Cyrene and Karthage.

The Greeks and Karthaginians were always rivals, and their after-disputes were not so easily settled; they both had possessions in Sicily which brought them into perpetual difficulties. Karthage began very soon to aim at supremacy at sea, an ambition that pleased nobody except the Etruscans. The Etruscans were a sea-going people, and a plank in their policy was always the Karthaginian alliance. Did not Aristotle say somewhere that the Etruscans and the Karthaginians "form one City"? And they were both of them up against Greece.

The Etruscans had made Rome out of the seven villages perched on the seven hills overlooking the swamps of the Tiber; they had given the city they made the capital of their empire a constitution and had begun to build up its future greatness, when they were turned out and their empire itself fell to pieces. The first treaty between the Rome of the Tarquins and the Karthaginians was signed in 509 B.C., and Livy mentions an embassy from Karthage arriving in Rome in the year 343 B.C. The combined fleets of Etruria and Karthage were beaten by the Phocians, a real disaster which was followed by the disappearance of Etruria, beaten at Cumæ by the Greeks and turned out of her capital by the Latins. Karthage lost an ally and found a powerful enemy in the new masters of the Eternal City.



*Benjamin H. H. H.*

RUINS OF A ROMAN HOUSE, KARTHAGE.



In the sixth century B.C. Karthage became the head of the Phoenician colonies, following on the fall of Tyre ; in the beginning of the fifth century she joined the Persians in a crusade against the Greeks and was defeated by them at Himera, on the same day that the Persians were annihilated at Salamis. In spite of these serious disasters she continued to prosper, to acquire new colonies and to affront other nations with her sea-going arrogance.

Meanwhile, Hellenism declined and the star of Rome was rising. After being partially taken and sacked by the Gauls, Rome bought off the Barbarians and set to work in earnest to re-organise her armies and to strengthen the broken-down defences of her walls. After three hundred years she was beginning to unify the various tribes that formed her population into an Italic federation, but there was much discontent in the north, and in the south Greater Greece was still in existence. And in Sicily, so near her shores, the Greeks still held the eastern coast with Syracuse, the Mamertines seized the point that overhung the Straits of Messina, and the rest of the island was under the dominion of the Karthaginians.

Those Karthaginians ! arrogant devils who had ventured to say that a Roman hardly dare put his hand into the Tyrrhennian Sea, a statement that had a sting in it in spite of exaggeration.

The burning question of the day was, who should keep the supremacy at sea ? Rome wanted the Tyrrhennian Sea that washed her shores, but she had no fleet worthy of the name ; Syracuse wanted the three seas, Tyrrhennian, Ionic and Adriatic ; Karthage

was practically without a rival in the Western basin of the Mediterranean.

The spark that lit the great conflagration of the Punic Wars was kindled in Sicily over an event of apparently small importance. The Mamertines, as we have seen, had established themselves in Messina ; Hiero, King of Syracuse, besieged them there. The Mamertines appealed to Rome, Karthage upheld Hiero.

The first campaign ended in favour of Rome, and then followed an interval during which Karthage was apparently inactive but was really straining every nerve to get together an army of mercenaries equal to the magnitude of the coming struggle. The great rivals were face to face at last. Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, whose temerity had caused them to make a treaty not so long ago, disappeared into obscurity, with the saying that has so often been quoted : " How fair a battlefield we leave to the Romans and the Karthaginians ! "

It is not easy to reconstitute Karthage as it was at the beginning of the first Punic War. Our ideas are rather vague and shadowy. The Byrsa was imposing with its temples and fortress and other buildings ; it was surrounded by a triple line of fortifications, beneath which three streets of tall houses, six stories high, reached down to the harbours. North and west lay the huge suburb of Megara containing villas and gardens of the rich Karthaginians. The whole city, with the suburbs, covered an area that was twenty-three miles in circumference, and the population was estimated at 70,000 souls, even after the losses suffered



during the second Punic War. The walls of Karthage were of immense thickness ; they contained barracks for the soldiers, magazines for war material, besides horseshoe-shaped stalls to accommodate two hundred elephants and stables for a thousand horses. The Forum was probably down in the lower town near the two ports that have been partially reclaimed of late years.

The circular war harbour, known as the Cothon, had trireme docks all round, radiating like the spokes of a wheel, and before each dock a couple of tall pillars of the Ionic order stood, forming part of a colonnade that surrounded the whole harbour. In the centre of the island stood the Admiralty buildings and the Admiral's Palace, from which the sound of the trumpet used to convey his orders to the warships. Recent excavations have brought to light Punic stonework which may have formed part of these buildings. Opposite the island were the baths, on the foundations of which the Turkish palace of Dermèche now stands—Dermèche being a corruption of Thermæ. Not far off was an extensive pottery, and beyond that one of the Punic cemeteries.

Beyond the fact that the Phœnicians were great engineers and fine builders, and that they were adaptive rather than original, we know very little about their architecture. They used great blocks of stone, as we may see to-day in the Wailing Wall at Jerusalem or in the substructure of the Temple at Baalbek, but they also used rubble and made a very strong concrete. The pillars in their temples and palaces were in wood, stone or marble, as the case might be, and their interior

decoration was probably as gorgeous as it is represented in Flaubert's sombre masterpiece.

Flaubert paid two short visits to Karthage before writing *Salammbô*, a passionate pilgrim, absorbing the atmosphere till, as he wrote to a friend, he knew Karthage "*à fond*." His archæology was not impeccable, and he was attacked by Sainte-Beuve and others directly the book appeared, representing, although it did, years of study. He acknowledged that he had presented pre-Roman Karthage with an aqueduct for the sake of making a sensational entry into the city for his two chief characters, Matho and Spendius. "*Mon aqueduct est une lâcheté ! Confiteor*," he wrote to Sainte-Beuve after his slashing review, criticising the book, appeared. What Flaubert did was to present a brilliant picture of what he imagined Karthage to have been, based on an extensive study of ancient art and ancient literature. The story of the stolen veil of Tanit is set in a sumptuous frame which appeals to the imagination, whether it be archæologically correct or no.

It was very natural that the Phœnicians, who were geographically hemmed in by the Hittites, the Mesopotamians and the Egyptians, and who were later to come under the influence of the Ægean and Hellenic Schools, should not have originated a school of their own. Without exactly copying the great temples of Egypt or their avenues lined with statues of the Sphinx, they assimilated certain details which persisted even after they migrated to Africa. And it was the same with the architecture of any more inventive nation. They took from the Ægeans the Ionic columns

that we have seen down on the quays by the harbour ; they took the heavy overhanging cornice and much of the decoration of the capitals of columns from Egypt ; the stepped cornice came from Mesopotamia. After the Romans imposed the Greco-Roman style of architecture wholesale on Africa, very little of the earlier influences remained.

The original temples of the Phoenicians were derived from the " High Places " of the Canaanites ; they must have resembled the modern mosque in so far as lay in the great courtyard, the Haram or sacred enclosure in which the sanctuary dedicated to the god was placed. That the Karthaginian temples were gorgeous within, decorated with metals and woods and marbles, we learn from Herodotus, who described pillars of gold and lapis lazuli standing before one of the temples. The temple dedicated to Eshmun was approached by sixty steps and was the richest in the city ; it must have presented an imposing appearance, standing up on high in the Byrsa, where the temple to Baal with the great brazen statue, and that to Tanit, were also.

The quarter by the ports appears to have been densely populated and very busy ; of the life the people led we can say little beyond the obvious inference that in a mercantile city there was great activity all about the ports. We know that there were libraries, baths, restaurants, or " public messes," and that in Roman times the theatres and the great amphitheatre provided places of amusement.

Where so much is uncertain, it is a relief to be told by M. René Cagnat that the little chapel of St. Louis and the surrounding gardens actually mark the site

of the temple of Eshmun. Some of the bases of the columns which face the entrance into the garden belong to the portico which surrounded the enclosure of the temple. The Cathedral itself is built on ground where there was once a building which may well have been the Capitol. From the ruins many fine bas-reliefs have been found dating from the first or second century, some of which have been placed on the wall near the entrance to the Museum.

M. Cagnat is of opinion that the immense cisterns at Dermèche may have been only repaired or partially reconstructed by the Romans; but the date on a tile, which was that of the reign of Hadrian, when the aqueduct was built that extended from Karthage to Zaghouan, is suggestive of the later date.

The form of government adopted by the Karthaginians was an oligarchy, much praised by Aristotle, which degenerated sadly. In the beginning the two Suffetes, or supreme magistrates, had only a Council of twenty-eight members over which they presided; any difficult question was referred to the people. But after the great Council, known as "the Hundred," came into office, the supreme power wielded by them was very much abused.

We can imagine the men in their long robes down to the feet and their high sugar-loaf head-dresses, with ear-rings in their ears and sometimes hanging from their noses; we can imagine the women in their draperies with as many jewels as their purse allowed. The vision of the people is clearer than that of their dwellings because of the rich store of strange objects found in the Punic cemeteries.

In those days people were buried with the things that they had used in life, as well as with the lamps and the vases that were supplied in differing quantities to all. We can thus reconstitute a toilet-table more easily than a temple, because a woman would have her looking-glass and her rouge-pot and a man his favourite razor—most decorative they were, too!—put by his or her side along with the pale clay of a Greek vase bearing a design in fine black varnish. Collars, rings, amulets and emblems of all sorts can be seen in the Lavigerie Museum, taken from the Punic tombs. Some of the amulets bear the open hand, many the eye of Osiris, on blue-green enamel; the emblem of Tanit is popular and many little figures of the goddess are to be found which have been treasured by people who passed away over two thousand years ago. One of these shows a plain little stumpy woman with a kind face and a beaming smile—one might almost call it a grin—the counterpart of the cruel Baal Moloch; she must have resented his bloody rites.

The most curious objects that have come from the tombs are grotesque masks, making hideous faces, put there to frighten away the evil spirits.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PUNIC WARS

WE judge the Karthaginians by the writings of their hereditary enemies, the Romans. We find them independent, industrious, clever, bold sailors, tough fighters when forced to defend their lives, but preferring to do their fighting vicariously as long as it was possible ; we find that, in their supreme hour of trial, they showed the greatest courage and perseverance—that they were animated by a splendid spirit. Their great men, though painted by the brush of prejudiced writers, stand out as types of heroism, but, as a nation, they had certain undeniable faults which made them feared rather than loved by their allies and hated by their enemies. The most salient of these were cruelty and arrogance, to which might be added love of wealth and indifference as to the manner in which it might have been acquired. It was a common saying that no questions were asked about how a fortune was made in Karthage.

It was their cruelty and their arrogance that alienated the people living round about. In the dark days of foreign invasion all sorts of old scores were brought up against Karthage ; indiscriminate crucifixions, extortions, oppression, and injustice. Even some of her own allied States were forced to pull down their protecting walls in order to acknowledge her supremacy ;

perhaps, also, so that they might not shut their gates against herself.

The cruelty that was inherent in the nature of the Karthaginians may have been partly due to their mixture of African blood, but it was certainly fostered by the rites of the Phœnician religion, replete with sacrifice of victims, human as well as animal. The great, brazen statue of Moloch stood in his temple with arms outstretched, and through his treacherous grasp thousands of little children slipped into the cauldron below, their shrieks drowned by the blast of trumpets and the thud of the drums. The Government, again, was quite callous as to the punishments meted out, whether they took the form of the crucifixion of an unsuccessful general or the torture of a slave.

Those who criticise Karthage because of her hired soldiers, collected from all parts of the countries round about, forget that the city State did not really constitute a nation, and never had resources enough, either of men or matter, within her own limits to carry on war on a grand scale. There was at one time a sort of regiment of guards, composed of citizens, known as the Sacred Band, who wore gorgeous armour and a ring to commemorate every action in which they had engaged ; but Karthage could never have produced a whole army.

During the first two years of the war the Karthaginians did not attempt any great feat of arms, but they were straining every nerve to get together an army fit to take part in the approaching struggle. They raised troops in Gaul, Spain, and Liguria, as well as enrolling thousands of Numidian horsemen and

buying elephants that were destined to strike terror into Roman hearts.

But, first and foremost, they relied on their fleet.

The Romans, meanwhile, had woken up to the conviction that they could never conquer a sea-going State without some ships. A Karthaginian quinquereme, thrown up by a storm on the Italian shore, gave them a model which they copied as well as they could, and the story goes that they taught landsmen to row on dry land, bending over their oars to the directing cry of the *keleastes*. Did the Karthaginians hear of this comic attempt? They must have laughed in their beards if they did.

When the Karthaginian fleet first sighted the jerry-built boats, with an odd machine like the mast of a ship swaying over the water, they thought that they had an easy prey. The story of their deception has often been told. The ingenious invention of a Roman landsman, who placed grappling irons on each boat to enable it to board an enemy ship, turned a sea-fight, with its complicated manœuvring, into what was practically a land-fight, in which the Romans won.

The laugh was on the other side when the news got to Rome, where a column was subsequently erected, known as the Columna Rostrata, because it was decorated with the brazen beaks of captured Karthaginian vessels—that was in 260 B.C.

On the whole, the news that came to those waiting in Karthage was bad. Hannibal, son of Gisco, was beaten again, and his own soldiers crucified him,



usurping the privilege of the Hundred. Rome was victorious in Corsica, and in the Phocian colony of Aleria ; then came news of a brilliant victory to the credit of the great Hamilcar Barca, but the sky was darkened again with ominous clouds when the greatest naval battle of the war was won by the Romans off Ecnomus, in Sicily. The Karthaginian fleet, three hundred and fifty strong, was destroyed, beaten in fair warfare this time. Admiral Hanno, with his life in his hands, went straight to Karthage to warn the Senate of the danger that threatened now that the fleet had ceased to exist which protected the shores of Africa. An invasion was imminent.

What days of suspense in Karthage ! What harangues in the Forum ! What gossip in the marketplace ! What whispers at street corners ! Every ship that sailed into the mercantile port was closely questioned. As to the victims thrown into Moloch's cauldron to appease his displeasure, who can render an account ? When Agathocles had approached the shores, some fifty years before, two hundred children had been sacrificed, as well as men who offered themselves as victims. And this was a far more serious menace.

When the Romans actually came, they lost time looting the country and taking one unprotected village and town after another ; then half the army was ordered home to winter quarters, and the remainder was installed in Tunis, under the command of one Regulus. Regulus offered terms to the Karthaginians, which were so harsh that they were rejected. The position was serious when an obscure Lacedemonean

named Xanthippus said that all that was needed was a good general to lead the troops. The saying was repeated up and down Karthage, and the recruiting officer, for such he was, was given a chance with the supreme command—the result being a complete victory, with Regulus dragged through the streets in chains.

There was a tremendous scene of excitement in Karthage, after the victors had marched in triumph up to the Byrsa. Feasting was the order of the day ; all night long songs were sung and voices were heard and sounds of revelry. And all night long Moloch's fire roared, and the groans of Roman soldiers were stifled by the thud of the drums and the shrill blast of the trumpets. The gods had indeed been on the side of the Karthaginians, and they did not even forget to send a tempest to wreck the poor remains of the Roman Army on the way home to Italy.

Years went on and the war dragged. The Romans lost four fleets, but still built new ships ; they won important battles, and African elephants provided a new thrill in a Roman triumph. Regulus, after five years in prison, was sent to Rome with a deputation to ask for terms of peace, but he advised against it, took slow poison, and returned to Karthage to no uncertain fate. His widow tortured two unfortunate Karthaginian hostages to avenge him.

Hamilcar carried on campaign after campaign in Sicily, struggling to maintain his mercenaries and to keep the enemy at bay. In spite of his skill, he was forced to leave the key of the Karthaginian empire in Roman hands after Hanno lost the battle of the Ægatian Isles that ended the war.

The terms offered by the Roman general were not very harsh, and they had perforce to be accepted. Rome had Sicily, where Karthage was forbidden to fight without her leave ; she was to restore all prisoners without ransom, and to pay a large indemnity. When the Romans declared the terms too easy, the amount to be paid was doubled, and the time allowed halved.

One would like to think of the twenty-two years that elapsed between the first and second Punic Wars as being times of peace and reconstruction for Karthage after the twenty-three years of continuous warfare through which she had just passed. But the terrible war of the mercenaries, the "Inexpiable War," which forms the subject of Flaubert's *Salammbó*, occupied two years. When the mercenaries revolted because of the two years' pay that was owing, the news spread like wildfire all over the country, and thousands flocked to their standard, either eager to revenge themselves on proud Karthage, brought so low by Rome, or in the hopes of rich booty. Hamilcar—sent for from Sicily—managed to slip between the two armies which were stationed at Utica and Tunis, and eventually cut up and destroyed the force which he had commanded for so many years and with which he had fought many a hard battle : a story of horrid deeds, a war, according to Polybius, which was "the most cruel and inhuman of which he had ever heard."

Karthage had now lost Sicily and Corsica, and would have been hard hit indeed had not Hamilcar made a new province in Spain, where he gained not only rich gold- and silver-mines, but an unrivalled recruiting-ground. He died there in battle in the year 228 B.C.

leaving his "lion's whelps" to continue his work, as well as a son-in-law, Hasdrubal, who founded New Karthage. Hannibal was then only nineteen, but he had already gained the affection of the soldiers, who elected him Commander-in-chief when he was only twenty-five years old. As a child of eight he had been asked by his father to take a vow of undying hatred to Rome, and he was even then looking forward to acting up to his childish promise. By attacking Saguntum, a Greek colony that was allied to Rome, he brought on the second Punic War.

Rome sent an embassy to Karthage to demand an explanation, which was not forthcoming. Quintus Fabius, the envoy, held up his toga and a sword, saying :

"I carry here peace or war ; choose ye which we will have."

"Give us whichever you please," they said.

"Then it is war," Fabius replied.

His words were greeted with shouts by men who had not forgotten old scores and who were longing for revenge.

It was from Spain that Hannibal set out on his tremendous adventure. Although so young, he was as much a diplomat as a soldier, and his trump-card was the dissolution of the Italic Federation. The hope of getting all the northern part of Italy, inhabited by turbulent tribes, to join his standard, is thought to be the only explanation of the route he chose. Why, many writers have asked, did Hannibal choose the long and arduous march through Gaul over the Alps, when he could have gone easily by sea? The

landing in Italy would not have presented a tithe of the difficulties that he encountered in the march over the Alps.

News came to Karthage of the smashing victories of Trebia and Trasymene, the Apennines crossed, Cannæ, where he took twenty thousand Roman prisoners. Excitement must have been at fever-height in Karthage, where men expected every day to hear that Rome had fallen. But Hannibal, striking terror wherever he went, attended with phenomenal success, marched right up to the walls of Rome, and then went on into Campania. Rome was now so strongly fortified that it was evidently an impossible attempt, and he still relied on breaking up the federation and turning Rome's heterogeneous vassals against herself. That he had every chance of succeeding we know; thousands flocked to his standard; his army increased, although he had no contingents from Karthage. If Rome had not, in the hour of danger, found a man to stem the torrent in the shape of the deliberate Fabius, who knows if Hannibal's great scheme had not been crowned with success?

Meanwhile the Scipios, Publius Cornelius, and Gneus began to cut off the recruiting-field in Spain, took New Karthage from Hasdrubal, and began those intrigues with the native princes of Africa which did so much to achieve the downfall of Karthage. The story is far more intimately connected with Karthage than that of Hannibal's sixteen years in Italy, which belong to the history of the world.

P. Cornelius Scipio, who had fought at Cannæ, crossed over to Spain in the year 210; in the following

spring he got possession of New Karthage, with its fine harbour, and seized the gold- and silver-mines, so admirably worked since the Karthaginians had taken them. Rome was now supplied with the corn and the riches, as well as the recruits, that had supplied Karthage since the loss of Sicily, and there is no doubt that Karthage was unable to send contingents to fill the ranks of the army in Italy.

The fascination of Scipio, his reputed miraculous birth, his psychic gifts and his social qualities, make him one of the most attractive personalities of the age. That he made capital out of his traffic with the gods is evident, but it was probably more than a pose; whatever it was, it gave an aroma of sanctity to a character that had all the charm of a man of the world, all the authority of one accustomed to command. Such a man, who had also the advantage of personal beauty, was calculated to impress the half-civilised Numidians, especially as he represented the ever-growing power of Rome.

Scipio had an adventurous spirit that prompted him to dare fate. When he began to realise that the alliance of the Numidian kinglets would be of immense help to him when he invaded Africa, he decided to act on his own initiative. Taking only a couple of quinqueremes, he embarked secretly by night from New Karthage and arrived off Stora, the port of Cirta, just as Hasdrubal, whom he had conquered many a time in Spain, arrived, with five triremes, on a visit to King Syphax. Hasdrubal was just going to attack the enemy ships when they slipped into port, and he was unable to fight in the Numidian king's waters.

What treachery was this? Syphax in league with Rome? Whatever thoughts Hasdrubal had, he was soon enlightened as to the character of the visit and the object of the unexpected guest.

Syphax behaved magnificently. He received both commanders hospitably, and tried to arrange an interview between them to settle their differences. Scipio refused, saying that he had no private score against Hasdrubal and no authority to act for his country. He could not refuse, however, to meet his late enemy at the Barbarian king's supper-table, where Syphax placed them on the same couch, and where they met in a friendly spirit that was much fostered by Scipio's natural charm. On this occasion, we read, he exerted himself to be agreeable, and completely fascinated his host as well as the Karthaginian general. When he left Cirta, the modern Constantine, he had achieved his object; Syphax had declared himself in favour of an alliance with Rome.

Clever as Scipio was, he had not counted on his well-thought-out plans being upset by a love-affair; he had not probably realised the existence of Hasdrubal's lovely daughter, Sophonisba. The story of Sophonisba is differently told, but the most conclusive is that which follows.

Some time after this supper-party took place, the Scipios sent a military deputation to Syphax asking him to become an ally of Rome. Syphax, flattered and anxious to act for the advantage of his kingdom, accepted, and asked if he could have help in training his infantry. The cavalry was without a rival—riding was an hereditary instinct; but the foot soldiers were

incompetent. Three centurions were left to instruct the Numidian foot, and the news naturally reached Karthage, with the result that an embassy was sent to Gala, King of the Massylians, the rival of Syphax, who was King of the Massacesylian Numidians, offering him an alliance against the common enemy. Gala's son Massinissa, who was then only seventeen years old, was enthusiastic for war, and the quarrel between the rival powers was intensified after he succeeded to the kingdom. When Massinissa was fighting for Karthage in Spain, he heard a rumour that Hasdrubal's daughter, Sophonisba, to whom he was affianced and with whom he was passionately in love, had been betrothed to Syphax, who was equally fascinated by her beauty and her spirit. Unknown to Hasdrubal, Sophonisba was given in marriage to Syphax, in order to get him back from his alliance with Rome ; and Syphax wrote Scipio saying that, as he was the husband of a Karthaginian, he must fight for his wife's country and her household gods.

This news must have taught a lesson to the Romans. They had trained the infantry of this perfidious king, they had presented him with an ivory throne, a crimson tunic, and a golden drinking-cup, as an acknowledgment of his services in fighting the Karthaginians ; and here they found him turning round in the hour of danger, just on the eve of the Roman invasion of Africa.

It was about this time that Scipio received a visitor in his camp in Spain ; this was no less a person than Massinissa, driven into the Roman alliance by this very marriage, which had infuriated him and had





*Bab-ar-Roumia.*

THE BAB-AR-ROUMIA, DOUGGA.

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turned him from Karthage. Scipio fascinated him, and Massinissa was ever after his friend and admirer, and was one of the most constant allies of Rome.

Then at last Scipio, after sacrificing to Courage and to Fear, called down the blessing of the gods on the expedition from the poop of his flagship and set sail for Africa, hoping to end the war on Karthaginian soil. "Hannibal's War"—the second Punic War—came to an end on the battlefield of Zama in the autumn of the year 202 B.C. The siege of Utica and unimportant engagements had not hitherto given the Romans a decisive victory. Syphax had pretended to favour each party in turn, and had even offered to arbitrate, but Massinissa went whole-heartedly with Rome.

The battle of Zama took place somewhere on the Upper Medjerda. Hannibal had passed the night digging for wells, being in a waterless region, which tired his men before the day dawned. In the morning he reminded his troops of their great victories in Italy, while Scipio sacrificed to the gods. Then the fight began, and raged with fury during the whole day. Did Hannibal and Scipio meet in single combat, as some old writers pretend? It was an heroic encounter, in any case, the only meeting of the two military men of genius since Hannibal's early victories in Italy, when Scipio served in an inferior capacity in the vanquished Roman Army.

After rallying his men time after time, Hannibal saw the day was lost and the remnant of his army flying in all directions. He himself escaped with

only one follower, and eventually got back to Hadrumetum and thence to Karthage, where he counselled submission, as the game was up. When some arm-chair critic got up in the Forum and advocated a continuance of the war he pulled him down, and afterwards apologised. He had forgotten the manners of the Forum after thirty-six years spent in camp.

The terms the Romans gave were very harsh this time. Karthage lost all her remaining possessions, including the Spanish empire carved out by the organising talent of the Barcine family. She lost her position as an independent State, as she might not carry on war without the permission of Rome ; and Massinissa was to be recognised as King of Numidia. The usual clauses regarding prisoners of war were there, and the worst blow of all was given in an order to destroy all the ships of the line except ten.

Five hundred ships were towed out of harbour and deliberately set on fire by the Romans in the sight of all men. Of all the tragic images that rise to the mind, when contemplating the site of Karthage, this is one of the most vivid. The whole city, rising up the slope to the summit of the Byrsa, must have caught the reflection of the flames in which the ships were destroyed.

Meanwhile, the drama of Massinissa, Syphax, and Sophonisba—the eternal triangle—was played out.

Massinissa fought for the Romans at Zama—and was rewarded by being given all the dominions of Syphax. He went at once to Cirta, and entered into the Great Palace, where he found Sophonisba waiting to receive him. She told him that she had been forced

to marry Syphax, that she had never loved anyone but himself. Massinissa, as passionate and headstrong as ever, "married her on the spot." But when he returned to the camp, he was coldly received. It appeared that, during his absence, Syphax, who was a prisoner, had not been idle. He was torn by jealousy, and evidently anticipated what actually happened. He represented to Scipio the influence that Sophonisba would have on Massinissa ; with her intense patriotism, she would wean him from the Roman alliance. He spoke of her as having been his madness, his fury, his curse. His words had so much effect that Scipio told Massinissa that he must give up his Karthaginian wife. Massinissa rode off to Cirta in hot haste, ostensibly to bring her back, but in reality to give her the poison that was to save her proud spirit from disgrace.

Sophonisba took the poison, telling her nurse not to lament, as she was making a worthy end ; she only regretted that death came so soon after marriage with the man she loved. When Massinissa returned with his escort, he found her lying dead. The records say that he gave her a royal funeral, and returned to his duties. The episode was over.

In the years that followed the chief event was the gradual reconstruction of national life in Karthage under the dictatorship of Hannibal. Hannibal reformed the financial system, paid off the great subsidy owing to Rome, and began to organise the army. Rome, remembering those sixteen years when she had lived in fear of the unconquerable enemy at her gates, at last protested, and asked for Hannibal to be given up.

It has been recently pointed out that the stories of the Karthaginians' ingratitude to their great man are pure fiction. They gave him the supreme command, with freedom to follow his own place of attack ; hazardous as it was, no protest was raised. They could not send him troops and money to Italy, as the supply was so soon cut off. After he lost the battle of Zama, far from blaming him, they made him chief magistrate, and meekly obeyed his instructions. When commanded to send him to Rome, they allowed him " to go into voluntary exile "—in other words, being too weak to oppose Rome, they connived at his escape.

As a shadow of her former self, but still as a flourishing commercial city, Karthage continued to exist. Her chief vexations were caused by Massinissa, who continued to harry the land, and was for ever attempting to get her into trouble with Rome. The astonishing vitality of this man—whose full-length portrait has been so admirably drawn by Livy—made his middle and old age as energetic as his youth had been. He was a great king, with all his faults. He had a veneer of civilisation that he had acquired by means of his education in Karthage and his intercourse with the Romans, but his instincts were those of his race. Hardy as any of his own countrymen, he would jump on a barebacked horse after his eightieth year, sleep on the ground as they did, and live on the herbs that were found by the way. The Numidians had no camp. At night the men took off the lion-skin that formed their only garment and used it as a rug to sleep on ; they had no food but what they could steal.

and no pay but the booty they took. That the chieftain of such men should not always have lived in great luxury was only natural, and Massinissa was probably more at home riding among his men or camping under the stars than he was in the grand palace of Syphax sitting on the ivory throne sent from Rome.

There is a story of Scipio Æmilianus coming to Massinissa's camp on a mission to collect elephants to take over to Spain, and, finding that a battle was imminent, Massinissa, then eighty-eight years old, mounted his horse without assistance and put his army in battle order. Scipio saw it all as one sees the spectacle at a theatre, and he said afterwards that he had never enjoyed seeing a contest so much, because it was the only one that he had witnessed at his ease.

Massinissa died at the advanced age of ninety, after having provoked the Karthaginians into a defence of their property which gave a pretext to Rome for starting the third Punic War.

Fifty years had passed since peace had been signed at the conclusion of the second war; Hannibal had died in exile, of poison, so it was said, and Scipio had died away from Rome, under a cloud. The two exiles met at Ephesus during the course of their wanderings, and then they fought their battles over again. The story is hackneyed, but it may find a place here as having some grain of truth in it. Scipio asked Hannibal to name the three greatest generals in history.

“Alexander,” said Hannibal.

“And the second?”

EA

“ Pyrrhus.”

“ And the third ? ”

“ Myself ! ”

Scipio smiled, and asked him what he would have thought if he had beaten him at Zama, and Hannibal replied that he should have put himself before Alexander and before Pyrrhus—before any other general in history.

Scipio Æmilianus, the adopted son of the eldest son of the great Scipio, had done good work in Spain and elsewhere before he came over to Africa to start the third Punic War ; he found that Utica had declared for Rome, which gave a perfect landing-place for his troops as well as a stronghold.

The Karthaginians were quite unable to fight Rome in their present situation, so they sent embassy after embassy declaring their willingness to accede to any terms imposed. Three hundred hostages were delivered, all orders given complied with ; still no definite promise could be wrung from the Senate, where Cato had been declaring in and out of season that Karthage must be destroyed.

After the Roman Army was in Utica, the envoys kept on hastening over from Karthage to learn their fate. The Romans demanded all arms of every sort to be brought to their headquarters, which was done. The long lines of waggons jolted along between Karthage and Utica until every catapult and every cannon-ball and every engine of war had been safely received. Then the last deputation learned the sentence hidden from them till their means of resistance had been taken away. Karthage was to be destroyed, and



the Karthaginians were to retire inland fourteen miles from the sea.

The delegates received this news in stupefied silence ; then they broke out into lamentations, crying out for mercy, but to all their protests the Romans replied that they had their orders, which must be obeyed. So the delegates—thirty of the principal citizens—returned to Karthage, and walked through the streets in a silence more eloquent than any words. Had they failed in their mission ? What were the mysterious terms of the treaty which Rome had kept from them up to the last ? Some dark suspicions must have been abroad, for the unfortunate delegates were stoned on their way to the Forum. Arrived there, they delivered the sentence of death on their city, which raised such a storm of fury as had seldom been let loose before.

Karthage went mad. People were torn to pieces in the streets ; some Italians found there were tortured. And then the torrent was stemmed, and the Karthaginians rose to the full height of their greatness. They shut the gates and resolved to defend themselves to the last. But how was it to be done ? There were no ships of war in the ports ; the arsenals were empty ; the stalls where the elephants and horses were stabled empty also. Without weapons, without any means of defence but the strong walls, the Senate of Karthage declared war on Rome.

In a very short time the silent city was turned into a huge factory. Temples became workshops where catapults were made, the fibre of which was often composed of the long hair of the women. Men, women,

and children worked laboriously, in shifts, night and day.

The siege of Karthage was carried on for three years, before the endeavours of Scipio Æmilianus to take it by assault were at last successful. The weakest part of the fortifications lay down by the mercantile harbour, and here he concentrated his attack. He built up a dyke, and he made a breach in the walls ; the Karthaginians repaired it in the night. He closed the narrow entrance to the harbour ; soon afterwards fifty triremes, built during the siege, rode out through a new channel and flaunted in the face of the enemy. At last the end came. Scipio effected an entrance into the mercantile port, and fought his way into the market, and so on into the streets.

The fight within the city lasted for six days. The Romans stormed the streets, house by house, finishing the fight on the roofs, from which the Karthaginians had been hurling down stones on the assailants. As each bit of street was gained it was fired, causing the death of many old people and children who had taken refuge in the cellars. The sound of falling stone and the crashing of burning timber, the war shouts of the soldiers and the screams of the wounded, all combined to make the scene one of exceptional horror.

The most determined of the defenders shut themselves up within the triple fortifications that surrounded the Byrsa, where they defended themselves until the Roman advance made it untenable. Then a band of suppliants came from the Temple of Eshmun, bearing rods, and asked permission for the remaining population to leave the city. The permission given, some fifty

thousand men, women, and children defiled through the gates to find themselves adrift on the world. In the Byrsa there remained nine hundred Roman soldiers—deserters—who, together with the most valiant Karthaginians, shut themselves up in the temple of Eshmun and sold their lives as dearly as they might. And Hasdrubal, an unworthy member of the great Barcine family, gave himself up to Rome, while his heroic wife slew her children and then stabbed herself to escape the humiliation of a Roman triumph.

Still Rome was not satisfied. Cato, who had visited Karthage more than once, and had been struck by her prosperity and the power of rising up out of the depths that she possessed, continued his parrot-cry, "*Delenda est Karthago*," and the decree went forth that all that remained was to be destroyed. Scipio performed the last abominable rites with reluctance. He had fought for six days and six nights, with hardly an hour's rest ; he could fight to the death, but when the victory was his he wanted to sheath the sword. But Rome must be obeyed.

The smouldering fires in Karthage were relit, the marbles were hacked, the temples spoiled ; so thorough was the work of destruction that hardly one stone remained on another. Then the plough was passed over the blackened soil, and the final curse was pronounced—that *Devotio* which dedicated the place to the Infernal Gods. The site on which Karthage had stood for seven hundred years was cursed ; the land was never to yield a harvest ; no human habitation was to be raised on ground given over to the spirits of darkness.

Scipio wept after performing the iniquitous rite, so his friend Polybius the historian, who was present, tells us. He quoted Homer on the fall of Troy, linking together in his thought the three great cities of antiquity—Troy, Rome, Karthage. Troy had fallen and Karthage. . . . What had the future in store for Rome?

## CHAPTER V

### RESURRECTION

JULIUS CÆSAR, encamped near the ruins of Karthage, had a curious dream. He dreamed that he saw a great army of men and that he heard their bitter weeping. When he awoke, he scribbled two words on his tablets that led to the rebuilding of the doomed city.

Cæsar was at the top of the wave. Those wonderful months in Alexandria with Cleopatra had been followed by the victories in Pontus ; the remnant of Pompey's army, brought over to Africa by Scipio and Cato, after Pharsalia, had been defeated at Thapsus. Scipio had committed suicide ; Juba, the Numidian King who had joined the Pompeian party, had done the same after the gates of his capital city, Zama, had been shut against him. Cato was defending Utica, but it was easy to see that he could not hold out long. Fate smiled on Cæsar ; it seemed as if nothing could resist him.

This Cato, known as Cato Uticensis, to distinguish him from his grandfather, the monster who had engineered the destruction of Karthage, was a stoic and a fine soldier, as well as a philosopher. When he found that the game was up, he ordered all his men to ship on board some transports, and when the last man was safely aboard, he killed himself after reading some passages out of Plato's essay on the Immortality of the Soul.

"Cato, I must grudge you your death, as you grudged me the honour of saving your life," was Cæsar's comment on the event. That was in the year 46 B.C.

The threefold triumph accorded to Cæsar in Rome for his victories in Egypt, Pontus and Africa, was specially magnificent. Cleopatra sat there in state to see him pass, and before her eyes the long procession wound by with its royal captives bound in chains of gold, amongst whom was her own sister Arsinoe with old King Vicingetorex and the boy King Juba II, who was to marry her unborn child.

Not so very long after Cæsar's dream, when he had planned to snatch back Karthage from the Infernal Gods, he lay in the Forum pierced by twenty-three wounds. A mere coincidence, or was the curse still potent? And did not hyænas tear up the boundary marks laid down to show the limits of the colony that Caius Gracchus had wished to plant there? All sorts of portents were spoken of under the breath.

Undeterred by superstitious fears, yet perhaps anxious not to appear to fly in the face of established religion, Augustus decided to carry out Cæsar's written instructions.

Twenty-four years after the *Devotio* had been declaimed over the smouldering ashes of Punic Karthage, Caius Gracchus had attempted to found a colony that he called Colonia Junonia under the protection of Juno Cælestis. Fifty years later Marius, flying from Sulla, found no better simile to his broken fortunes than the blackened ruins of Karthage, where no traces of human habitation were to be seen. When told that he must leave Africa or be prosecuted as an



The Basilica, Karthage.





enemy to Rome, he tried to excite pity by telling the messenger to say that he had seen "Caius Marius sitting among the ruins of Karthage."

When Augustus determined to rebuild Karthage, he was probably influenced by the desire to utilise the cornfields and olive-groves, to profit by the tremendous fertility of all that coast ; to have a city which should impress the natives with the power of Rome as well as form a centre for Roman activity was the first necessity. The position of Karthage, superbly placed over the bay and having still its ports, made it preferable as a site to Utica, which was being gradually turned into an inland city by the vagaries of the River Bagradus. The sad remnant of the Karthaginian people that lived in the neighbourhood must have looked on with amazement as an army of men, building under the directions of a Greek architect, set to work to raise up the city of their forbears out of the rubbish-heaps on Byrsa. They used the old material, working quickly under military discipline, and results of their labour were soon apparent. Temples and palaces, baths and theatres, high houses and market-places, sprang up again on the sites of those that had disappeared ; a new Forum took the place of the old one, villas appeared among the woods and gardens in Megara, the old strip of land running out to La Goulette, the Tænia, or ribbon, became a populous suburb. Right up to the top of Byrsa the city rose again, greater and far more magnificent than ever before.

Rome did nothing meanly. If she had no great inventive powers with regard to art and architecture,

she had the great good sense to copy the best models, adapting their style and giving to them her own seal. She never ran up mean streets that would be "good enough" for a provincial station or erected a hideous building because it had to serve a less honourable purpose. Her provincial towns are as imposing as those nearer home; a ruined market-place has often been, at first, mistaken for a temple on account of its columns and marble statues.

Very soon after Karthage became habitable, colonies of poor people were planted there from Italy, townspeople from neighbouring towns in Africa were brought in; the old Karthaginians left their huts and joined the new colony. The town began once more to hum with life and a period of great prosperity set in.

It has been suggested that this rebuilding on a site once devoted to the powers of evil was not well looked on in Rome, where religious scruples still obtained. A curious theory has been developed by M. G. Gastinel in an article on "Karthage et l'Énéide" which he contributed to the *Revue Archéologique*. It appears that when, in 1916, a garden was being laid out on the slopes of Byrsa, a white marble altar was unearthed. The altar had four panels in relief, representing the Emperor Augustus offering a sacrifice; Apollo, symbolising Troy; a helmeted goddess, Rome; Æneas carrying his father on his back and leading his son by the hand, Karthage. The whole was surmounted by a device of entwined serpents. This latter device is most unusual, and the author concluded that it symbolised the Infernal Gods.

Here then was an Æneid in marble; Augustus,

setting forth as his ancestor had done from Troy, to found Rome, re-founding Karthage, and offering an expiatory altar to the gods to whom the site had been dedicated by the *Devotio*. An inscription found near by set forth that a priest named Hedulus had erected a temple, *Gentis Augustæ*, on Byrsa, and the author concluded that it might well have been placed there as a sop to the scrupulous who resented human habitations being erected on a site once cursed. The *Devotio* was a very serious affair, spoken with solemnity and with the orator's hand touching the earth and held up to heaven to invoke the gods of heaven and hell.

This temple, containing statues of the deified Cæsar and of Augustus and his family, must have stood in a prominent position below the Roman temple to Æsculapius, which replaced the Punic temple to Eshmun. Hedulus, whose name appears on Roman tiles of the period, probably made a fortune out of rebuilding Karthage, and may have been in a position to erect a temple at his own expense with its expiatory altar and its glorification of the ruling powers. The hypothesis is interesting when worked out with all the detail that M. Gastinel devotes to the subject.

Rome did very little in Africa after the destruction of Karthage; she kept certain maritime cities and exercised sovereignty over native princes, but made no effort to annex the country further inland. After Augustus rebuilt the city, other cities and forts began to appear; roads were made—the first was that which ran between Karthage and Utica—and blockhouses were built at intervals to protect the caravans against

the nomads who swept the country periodically, seeking what they could devour. Roman colonists settled in the new towns, the export of grain, oil and other products made a healthy industry. Unluckily some of those sent out by Rome to govern the country took advantage of their power and opportunity to enrich themselves at the expense of the people. One of the greatest sinners in this respect was the historian Sallust, appointed Governor of Numidia by his friend Julius Cæsar; his extortions nearly caused an insurrection, but he retired happily to Rome, where they helped him to enjoy life in the splendid Horti Sallustiani on the Quirinal, where he wrote that African classic on the Jugurthine Wars.

In the new Karthage the old gods were not forgotten. The Romans were hospitably disposed towards the gods of other nations, as tablets found in provincial temples show us. In Roman Karthage Æsculapius and Eshmun, Baal and Saturn, shared their worshippers' tributes, while Tanit lived again as Venus and Juno Cælestis in a temple where even the ancient Dido cult found an altar. For many a long year, too, secret meetings, with the old rites of human sacrifice, were held in the temple of Baal Saturn.

Of course the treasures contained in the old temples were gone past recovery. Soldiers had hacked to pieces the golden statue of Apollo that stood in the Greek temple on Byrsa, carrying away pieces of metal as booty; gold, silver, lapis lazuli, precious stones, bronze, rare marbles, all the interior decorations had been destroyed or carried away. The old buildings could never be replaced, but Rome built up fine new

temples in the Greco-Roman style, placing within them copies of stock statues of the gods and goddesses and heroes and rulers of the new dispensation.

Scipio had taken a great many works of art to Rome and he had restored those taken from Sicily to their rightful owners; he gave any books that escaped destruction to the "native kings," according to Pliny, only reserving Mago's works on Agriculture which he caused to be translated into Latin for the benefit of future colonists. A utilitarian proceeding, unworthy of a man who aspired to his family's taste for letters. The lost Punic works are irreplaceable, like the log-book of Admiral Hanno, which he hung up in the Temple of Baal after his adventurous voyage down the coast of Western Africa.

Karthage became a centre of Christianity at a very early date, but the Christians were not received kindly by the Romans. If we go to the ruined amphitheatre of Karthage where Cardinal Lavigerie's cross now marks the place where martyrs fell, we can picture the amphitheatre crowded as for some festive occasion. The mixed population—Roman, Karthaginian, Lybico-Punic, Berber, with a posse of Greeks, Arabs and blacks from the interior, wait, with what patience can be assumed, for the supreme moment. The first martyrs that we know anything about are these called the Scillitan martyrs, who suffered during the bitter persecutions of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Their *Acta*, a document written in what is the earliest specimen of Christian Latin, is also the earliest document of the African Church that has come down to us.

Scitta or Scillinum was a town of Numidia where this group of Christians lived, twelve men and five women, whose names were partly Punic and partly Latin. They were tried and executed in Karthage, where the first Christian basilica was dedicated to their memory. That was in the year A.D. 180, just before the death of the philosophic emperor caused a relaxation in Christian persecutions, which were not so violent under Commodus, who had no pretensions to philosophy.

The best known of all the martyrs of the early Church in Africa are St. Perpetua and her group, who were thrown to wild beasts in this very arena.

The amphitheatre at Karthage is not very picturesque or imposing in its present state, but it is well described by Al Idrisi, Geographer to King Roger II of Sicily, who saw it in the twelfth century. Idrisi was a member of one of the ruling Arabic families, who fled from Spain to Africa ; he was educated at the University of Cordova and wrote a charming geographical book about the adventures of a " Curious Mind " in foreign parts, as well as making the famous celestial sphere and map of the world in silver. He travelled about Africa and described the amphitheatre as having five rows of arcades, with walls encased in marble, decorated with garlands and sculptured figures in relief. Two gates—the Gate of Life and the Gate of Death—opened into the arena, and under it were prisons. Some of the substructures are still open to the public, where a cell has been turned into a chapel dedicated to St. Perpetua, in which there is a small

altar of yellow marble from the temple of Æsculapius and two columns of verde-antique marble from the basilica of Damous al Carita.

Perpetua and her brother Saturninus belonged to a wealthy family of Tebessa—Thuburbo Minor; their parents were pagans, and their father begged them to abjure the new faith; Perpetua was a wife and mother—he begged her to think of her child. The reply that she gave is touching in its simplicity. She pointed to a little pitcher lying on the ground, saying that nothing would make it anything but a little pitcher and nothing could make her anything but a Christian. The father was in despair. It was so easy to avoid the martyrdom his daughter sought so earnestly—a handful of incense thrown before a pagan altar, a false certificate easily obtainable. But Perpetua and the others were taken to Karthage in chains, and Felicitas, a slave, was delivered of a child just before the final scene.

Perpetua was very human. She loathed the darkness of the prison, the great heat of the multitudes assembled there, the violence of the soldiers—"O bitter day!" But the prison became a palace when she was allowed to have her baby with her, and the visions that came upheld her spirits.

"Lady, my sister," Saturninus said, "can you not ask for a vision to tell us our fate?"

Perpetua promised, and that night she dreamed of a golden ladder set about with swords up which Saturninus passed first and she followed, treading on the head of the dragon. When she arrived in heaven, a Man, "great and stately," bid her welcome and gave

her "milk of cheese" to eat. She awoke with a strange sweet taste in her mouth.

Perpetua was only twenty-two years old when she appeared before the multitudes assembled in the amphitheatre to see her die. Audiences were abominably cruel in those days, and the sight of Christians suffering delighted them. "Washed and saved!" they would cry derisively when the blood began to flow. The group of martyrs died game, and Perpetua ended her suffering by directing the hand of an inexperienced gladiator against her own breast.

The three great names that bring honour to the African Church are Tertullian, the first of the Church writers who made Latin the language of Christianity, Cyprian, bishop and martyr, and Augustine, one of the most famous of the "Fathers of the Church."

Tertullian was born in Karthage about the year A.D. 155; he made the usual studies in Latin and Greek and rhetoric, possibly travelled to Rome and became head of a Montanist community in his native city.

Cyprian was forty-six years old when he experienced what he calls his "heavenly birth"; his family, originally from Cyprus, was well known and much respected in Karthage, where he was trained as a rhetorician and professor of philosophy before he entered the Church and became Bishop of Karthage. The assault on Christianity was highly organised in his time, when commissioners sat in every town and the pro-consul went on circuit giving judgment against the offenders. When the cries of the people began to be heard crying, "The Bishop to the lions!" and the authorities were just going to carry out their





ROMAN AQUEDUCT BETWEEN KARTHAGE AND ZAGHOUAN.



desire, Cyprian escaped. He lived for some years, busily working for the persecuted Church, and a saying of his that has come down to us explains his attitude: "The white rose of the crown of labour," he said, "might be as fair as the red rose of martyrdom." When his time came he wore the red-rose crown as worthily as he had worn the white.

"It pleases that Thrascius Cyprian be beheaded with the sword," was the sentence, to which the Bishop replied quietly: "*Deo gratias!*" He died magnificently, giving twenty-five pieces of gold to the executioner.

St. Augustine was born at Tagaste on the 15th of November, A.D. 354. His parents were of no social importance, and they were not rich, but they managed to send him to Madauros, the old Numidian city of King Syphax and the birthplace of Apuleius, author of *The Golden Ass*, to be educated, and to Karthage to finish his studies and to get a start in life. Augustine's *Confessions* are the most familiar and intimate documents, whether he is approaching God, to whom they were made, or man, for whose benefit they were written down. He conceals nothing and is extremely modern in his point of view.

The Karthage that Augustine paints is a sink of iniquity in the eyes of the saintly Bishop of Hippone, and he makes no pretence of having resisted the temptations of all sorts with which he was surrounded during the three years that he spent there. He had violent likes and dislikes and a regular passion for the theatre, or rather for the amphitheatre, where the brutalising and bloody encounters of gladiators and

wild beasts, beloved by the Romans, had taken the place of the old Greek drama. He loved a game of paume and protested to his master, who objected to such frivolity, that he, the said master, was more likely to get angry over a lost argument than his pupil ever did over a lost game. He loved Latin, which he had absorbed unconsciously, and hated Greek because of the trouble of learning a new language. He was a good student when interested, and made excellent progress in rhetoric, but his heart had to be in his work.

Looking back over his life, Augustine often wonders why he was not given a legitimate wife ; as no marriage was arranged, he made an irregular union with a woman and lived with her for fifteen years, having a son by her to whom he was deeply attached. When quite young he read the *Hortensius* of Cicero, and conceived a violent passion for studying the wisdom of the world. In his search for truth he fell in with the Manichæans, and remained in that sect for many years to the despair of his mother, who was a fervent Catholic.

When twenty-eight he went to Milan, where he was brought into the fold by St. Ambrose, afterwards going to Rome to teach rhetoric because he heard that the young men students were less wild there than at Karthage, where every sort of licence was allowed. After the death of his beloved mother, Monica, he returned to his native town to found a monastery, but was induced to enter the Church, when on a visit to a friend at Hippone. Here he wrote many of his great treatises, and the *City of God*, his most important work next to the *Confessions*. But he was not destined

to end his days in peace. The Vandals swarmed over the country ; Karthage was sacked and occupied, Cherchel was burned, Hippone was besieged ; only Constantine, aloft on its saddle over the gorge of the Rummel, was safe.

Augustine lived through three months of the siege, before he fell ill of fever and had to leave off ministering to other people. Even then they would not leave him in peace. People came to ask him to heal the sick ; they demanded a miracle.

" My son," said the dying Bishop to one of these suppliants, " you can see in what state I am in ; if I had power over illness, I should begin by curing myself."

Typical words coming from the most sincere of mortals. In the end he slipped quietly away in the silence broken by the chanting of psalms, and before the city was given up.

Karthage rose again after Belisarius took it in the name of the Emperor Justinian ; the walls were rebuilt in the reign of Theodosius II, basilicas and houses were erected, but it never regained the old splendour. Salvian, the Christian writer, who is supposed to have visited Karthage in the sixth century, when he described it at some length, says that the population numbered 500,000 souls, and that there were twenty-three basilicas. Allowing for some exaggeration, it is evident that once more the old Punic city was prosperous, if not great.

And then the final catastrophe. The Arab conqueror, Hasan-en-Naman, took Karthage, but was unable to keep it, and unwilling for an enemy to

profit by its still strong walls, so he once more decreed its total destruction.

Léon l'Africain, writing in the sixteenth century, speaks of the miserable condition of the poor people who lived in wretched huts on the site of Karthage; he says that there were about twenty shops and perhaps five hundred shanties, besides a fine church and a school, recently built. The people, who were probably descendants of those who lived in the Byzantine city, were terribly poor on account of taxation, and so proud that they refused to take advantage of the school that had been set up for their benefit. They were gardeners and cultivators of fruit, for the most part, selling their produce to the rich citizens of Tunis. In the see-saw of time, Tunis had again profited by the downfall of Karthage, as she had done several times already, and as we see her to-day, proudly enthroned over the bay that now takes her name while Karthage exists no longer.

The most interesting relics of the Byzantine period are the *Damous al Carita*—the suggested derivation from *Domus Caritatis* is not accepted by modern authorities—the basilicas of St. Cyprian and St. Perpetua, a subterranean chapel in which traces of frescoes still subsist, and a denier of the time of Louis IX of France. This coin was brought to light by a rat boring his hole in the gardens of St. Louis in the year 1892; it must have remained in the earth since 1270.

It will be remembered that the King, during the course of his ill-fated crusade, landed at Karthage and encamped among the ruins on Byrsa. A month of

summer heat and the ravages of the plague had already weakened his forces when he caught the disease himself and died here on August 25, 1270. His death is pathetically described by the Sire de Joinville, who was present. "Après se fist le saint roy coucher en un lit couvert de cendre, et mist ses mains sur sa poitrine, et en regardant vers le ciel, rendi a nostre créateur son esperit, en celle hore meismes que le filz Dieu mourut en la croix."

And so it came to pass that the Karthage of Hannibal and Baal and Tanit becomes merged in the Karthage of Christian martyrs and Church Synods, and is finally crowned by the white domes of the cathedral dedicated to King Louis of France. The Muhammedan story of the King's conversion to the faith of Islam and his burial in the mosque at Sidi Bou Said is one of the most curious on record. However it originated it has obtained for the Crusader King a place of honour in the Moslem Calendar in the company of Moses and of Christ.

The immense story of successive cities on the hill crowned by Byrsa is only very vaguely sketched out, and yet it has taken up all the space that might have been devoted to following patiently in the footsteps of the archæologists. Let us read the story in the pages of the classics and in the interesting books contributed by modern scientists, and then we shall appreciate the exhibits in the Lavagerie Museum and the Bardo, as well as in the Louvre and the British Museum. These inanimate objects once used by Karthaginians, these fragments of mosaic and mutilated statues and capitals from columns that stood in temples

two thousand years ago, become animated by the memory of the past. "We shall not harm your tombs," the Romans had promised when condemning the dwellings of the living, and to-day we reap the benefit because so much that is interesting has been found in these unrifled cemeteries. The lower rooms in the Alaoui Museum teem with interest when considered in connection with the past history of the place and the people ; the glass cases in the Lavigerie Museum are as amusing as a book, the pages of which you can turn over at will. Fresh from memories of St. Louis and relics from Christian catacombs you may pause before the one really beautiful figure that has come down from Punic times, the celebrated statue of a priestess of Tanit or of Tanit herself which has been so often described. The costume worn is that of the traditional goddess or queen of Egypt with certain features which show a Greek influence. The face is beautiful, serene and queenly, the eyes are painted under the Egyptian head-dress, the long robe is crossed by a great pair of wings which leave the feet free ; the left hand holds an offering. Coloured and gilded, faint traces of which still remain, this figure in high relief lay on the coffin of a priestess of Tanit whose skeleton was of a negroid type. A proof, if one be wanted, to show the mixture of race in the Karthaginian people.

Leaving the Lavigerie Museum and standing once more in the garden that surrounds the monastery and the Cathedral of the White Fathers of the Desert, the beauty of the scene is most striking. The garden itself is glossy with evergreen oaks and grey with



olives and pale green with the young shoots of chestnut-trees ; among the privet hedges and the pepper-trees, the cactus and the palms, lie broken columns suggestive of the past. Down there beneath us the turquoise sea grows milky-white near the shore and is chased by changing lights over its rippling surface, while beyond it the mountains are violet and sapphire and pale blue as the clouds chase each other across the sky.

This is the real Karthage.

## CHAPTER VI

### AN EAGLE'S NEST

THE Roman road that ran from Karthage to Sicca Veneria, the modern Al Kef, and on "*usque ad fines Numidiæ*," as the military milestones have it, passes Dougga on its way. That is to say, it passes by the base of the mountain on a spur of which the old Numidian stronghold was built; a monumental arch once marked the place where the branch road joined the highway.

Seen from the plain below, the native village gleams white on its eyrie, while the few remaining columns of the temple of Saturn are silhouetted against the sky. The road climbs up, winds in and out, passing dolmens and rifled Punic tombs, and we stop in the very centre of the old municipal life, at the doors of the theatre.

Dougga was originally a fortified Berber village named Thukka or Thugga, a word signifying pastures; placed as it was in the centre of an intensely fertile country, the title was appropriate. The late Dr. Carton has pointed out in his interesting "guide" that the town in its Roman form is quite different to those other cities built up by the Romans during their occupation.

It was essentially an African city with a Roman veneer, preserving some of its native characteristics through the ages. The story of Thugga is again



Temple of the Capitol, Dougga.



symbolic of the see-saw of history. An African village, a Karthaginian colony, a Roman *pagus et civitas*, a Byzantine citadel, it fell under the destructive rage of Arians and Donatists, of Vandals and Arabs, and has now returned to the original starting-point as a native village.

As a Berber stronghold it afforded a refuge for the rich owners of land in the plains spread out at its feet, who flocked in when danger threatened, driving their herds before them. The Karthaginians, attracted by the fertility of the district, planted a colony here and developed the town, building temples and houses, but keeping to the original dimensions. The Romans, when they came in the second century A.D., found a very prosperous town, well provided with water, placed in an almost inaccessible position, already well fortified and occupying a strategic position on the road between Karthage and Tebessa.

The Karthaginians occupied the greater part of the town, while the Berbers lived among their flocks and crops; the municipal government was on the pattern of that of Karthage, with a couple of magistrates—the *suffetes*—at the head. When the Romans came, they seem to have made no immediate change in the government: the *suffetes* still kept their functions under Roman supervision. Later on the inhabitants of Thugga were divided into two classes by the newcomers: the citizens and the country-people, *utriusque ordinis*, figure in Roman records.

When the Romans began to rebuild Thugga they evidently took into consideration the advantages to be derived from the commanding situation and weighed

them against the disadvantages of a cramped position. Having decided in favour of the former, they began to build very much on the old lines, erecting their houses along the narrow, twisting streets of the old Numidian town.

As a consequence of the sloping ground on which the town stood, great flights of steps and sloping pavements led from one level to another, a characteristic of the older foundation that became one of the later. Many writers have written about Dougga, but this point is nowhere more clearly brought out than in M. René Cagnat's study of three cities—Karthage, Timgad, and Tebessa. When speaking of Dougga, he shows how the old forms persisted, and has some interesting things to say about the temples.

Dr. Carton was the first to start digging at Dougga, and his labours were richly rewarded; the work has recently been carried on by the *Service des Antiquités*. The excavations are doubly interesting because of the different dates of the monuments.

Beginning with the Temple of Saturn, the pillars of which we saw silhouetted against the sky from the valley below, we find comparatively little of the building standing. The great, grey pillars have no architrave; little remains of the temple beyond the foundations of the wall of the enclosure and the chapels at the back where the statue of the god stood. From the terrace in front of the portico, which was cut out of the living rock, a panoramic view of the country can be obtained, wide plains, fertile valleys—a great space ringed round with hills.

Here stood, in something approaching a “ High

Place," the original Karthaginian temple to Baal, which probably took the place of an earlier and more modest shrine erected by the Berbers. Like all these Oriental temples, it was open to the sky, and consisted of a shrine at the extreme end of a large courtyard, surrounded by a colonnade, which had an altar in the middle for the sacrifice. This form has been preserved in the temple that the Romans rebuilt and dedicated to Saturn, while preserving the cult of Baal. For, as they said, in their open-minded way :

" This Baal whom the Africans adore, is really the same as our Saturn ; let us unite and worship them in the same sanctuary."

As we enter the precincts of the temple we must certainly agree with both the writers mentioned, that if the exterior is Greek, with its fluted columns, the interior is distinctly Semitic. We have here the sacred enclosure at the east end, in which were three chapels, the middle and larger one being the shrine of the god. The walls of this chapel were decorated in a most original manner with a design of a stem of vine in stucco, the bunches of grapes and the leaves being in high relief. A portion of this decoration is still to be seen ; the idea seems even more Semitic than the plan of the temple. Another very curious feature of this temple consists of an engraving in the flagstone before the shrine of two footprints. It is usually supposed that these were part of the older temple and that the priest stood here to worship Baal towards the rising sun. Excavations under the temple brought to light over six hundred amphoræ containing coins, perfumes, and the bones of small animals

sacrificed to Baal, as well as many stelæ with Punic inscriptions. These discoveries, together with the persistence of Punic rites in the temples, have made it clear that Dougga was at one time a Karthaginian colony.

North of the temple was the old Numidian acropolis, and beneath it the basilica which the Byzantine dispensation built out of the fabric of the temple. Not much remains of the church, but the crypt is intact, with an inscription announcing that it had been built to commemorate Christian martyrs and that funeral banquets were held there in their honour. One of the great columns of the temple still left standing bears evidence of the iconoclastic hatchets of the Christians, who had evidently found the marble too hard, and had left it to throne over the ruins of the church it was to have adorned.

The most important alteration that the Romans made was removing the old Numidian wall on the side of the mountain and filling in a ravine; over the ground thus levelled they built a new quarter. With this exception they seem to have kept to the old limits, and they even divided the Forum into two parts, connecting them by a flight of steps, because of the difficulty of finding a large enough space of level ground for so important an object. The principal buildings were all erected within thirty years—the last thirty years of the second century A.D.; the Hippodrome, the two gates, and the Temple of Cæleste date from the beginning of the third century.

What a scene Dougga must have presented during those thirty years! Old buildings pulled down, new



foundations growing up, the sound of the hammer and chisel sounding everywhere, as Thukka disappeared and the "Colonia Licini Septimia Aureliana Alexandriana Thugga" was born: a transformation that must have surprised the original inhabitants before they became accustomed to the new order of things.

After examining the temple and admiring the view from the terrace, we may pass on to the theatre, which is one of the most complete and picturesque, though not the largest, in Northern Africa. It is scooped out of the hollow of the hill in the Greek fashion, and is calculated to hold about three thousand spectators. The central staircase cuts right through the cavea to the gallery; shorter flights of stairs are on either side. The body of the house is much like many others, but the stage is interesting because so much of the decoration and even of the machinery is still to be found in place.

The groups of tall, white columns with Corinthian capitals that ornamented the proscenium must have had two other orders over them, raising the top of the great screen to the level of the gallery; and we know that there were colossal statues here, one of which, representing Lucius Verus, is in the Bardo Museum at Tunis. Mutilated as it is, the lower row of columns, in two larger and two smaller groups, is wonderfully satisfying to the eye; when complete the screen must not only have made a splendid background for the display, but have formed a very effective entrance for the performers.

The stage is approached by a flight of steps on either side, and Dr. Carton has reconstructed it in a

sketch which shows the stage manager looking through a sort of window on one side and the prompter on the other, while a slave is crawling under the boards towards an actor who is about to appear on the scene as a god.

When some of the heavy columns of the proscenium came crashing down, they broke the mosaic which covered the floor of the stage, and the vaulting underneath gave way; for that reason the trap-doors and the machinery that still exists are not to be seen at present. The stage was shut off by a series of hangings sliding on rods, which could be raised or lowered from below, and all the arrangements were evidently very much up to date.

M. Cagnat describes this theatre in detail when speaking of the theatre of Timgad, to which he compares it. He notes its fine state of preservation: the twenty-five rows of steps, rising one above another, are almost intact; the stairs that divide the different parts of the house vertically have not one step missing. "The higher part," he writes, "was, as in other theatres, crowned by a colonnade which ran round the building; there the people crowded together in what we call the 'pouailler.' It has broken away in parts, but not without leaving very distinct traces of the wall to which it was attached and of the door by which access to it was gained. The Orchestra, paved with large slabs, was, as well as the house, adorned by statues, the pedestals of which are still in place. The statues represented the Emperors and the benefactors of the city.

"The wall of the Scena is not less well preserved.

It has retained all its elegant decoration, which is simpler than that at Timgad ; we still see its moulded plinth and cornice, its rectangular niches alternating with round-headed niches—nothing is wanting except the altar, which probably occupied the middle niche.

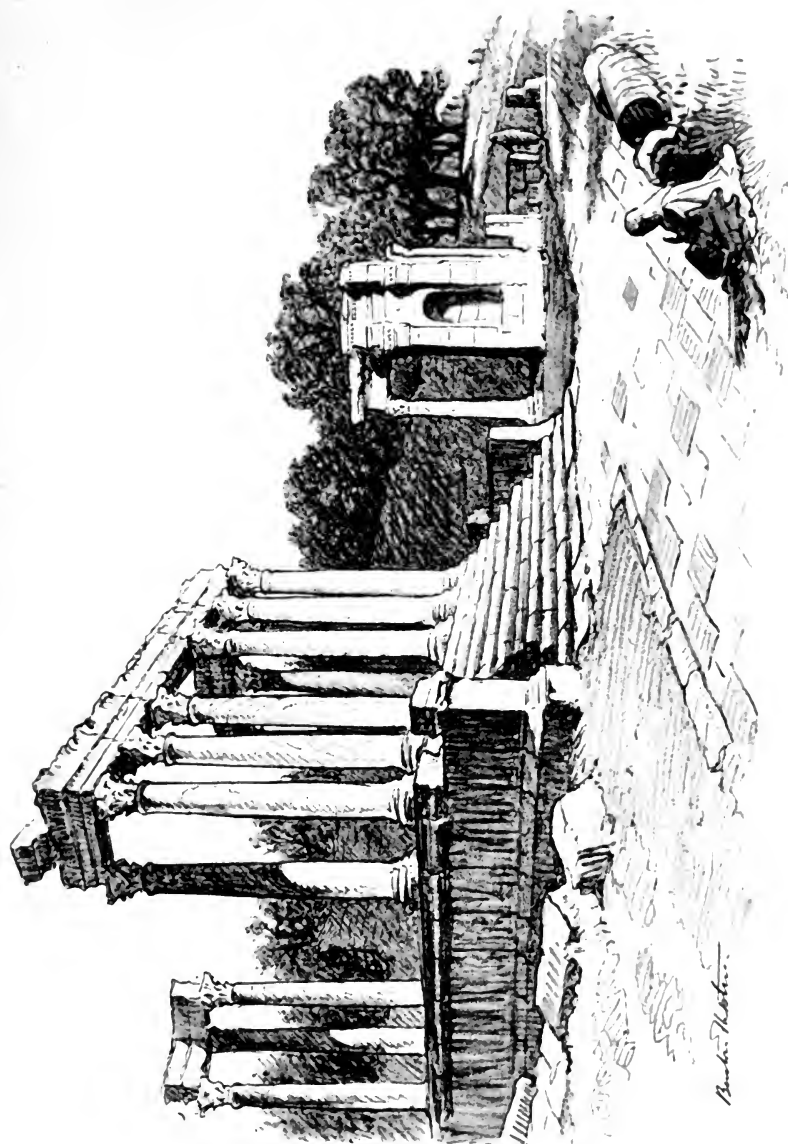
“ The back part of the Scena has not, as at Timgad, entirely disappeared. It appears as a great, straight wall, with three openings, two of which are square, and one, the centre, is circular. Each of these bays has a door which opens into the stage. We know that every ancient Scena possessed, instead of back cloths which are changed with every scene, a wall with three doors : the royal door in the centre, through which the grand personages entered from the palace, and two side doors, supposed to communicate with the country or the street, reserved for strangers. In front of this great wall was a platform on which thirty-two columns stood, making a sort of ornamental foreground. On the other side of the Scena, that is to say, in front of the theatre, there was, as in many other places, including Timgad, a colonnade where the audience could walk between the acts. From thence the gaze could extend far away over the plain of the Oued-Khaleed, now green with olive plantations, corn- and pasture-land, which was then covered with villas, farms, and villages, framed by the long line of high mountains on the horizon, their summits hidden in mist or gilded by the sun, according to the season and the hour.”

The Romans, who elevated monuments in their own or provincial cities, always made a point of mentioning the fact in an inscription ; it was very often of course

a bid for a big appointment, a sop to the multitude or an effort to attract the attention of the rulers of the State. The same efforts, for more or less worthy reasons, inspired the Romanised Africans in Thugga. The family of Marcius, Romanised as to name, but evidently African as to origin, did much for Thugga, and it was a member of that family who built the theatre. He was evidently proud of so completely furnished a specimen of a playhouse, one with all the modern improvements that Rome had added to the Greek idea, for he mentions the various points categorically.

“ Publius Marcius Quadratus, son of Quintus, of the tribe of Arnensis, a flamen of the divine Augustus and pontiff of Karthage, offers his native city this theatre to celebrate his being elevated to the rank of a perpetual flamen.” He calls it a “ theatre with basilicas, a portico and passages, as well as a stage furnished with curtains and completely decorated with marble statues.” He built it with “ his money,” and also gave scenic representations, a festival, and athletic games, as well as distributing food. Obviously, Publius Marcius Quadratus, the son of Quintus, deserved well of his native city, and one would like to have been present at the first performance given in his theatre and to have heard the applause that must have greeted the donor when he appeared. Did he wear a Roman toga and a wreath on his head? A great day for all ranks of society in Thugga in the year A.D. 169.

From the theatre we pass to the Capitol, and find ourselves in the most striking part of the field of ruins.



TEMPLE OF CAESTIS, DOUGGA.



The golden stone of the Temple of the Capitol, the fine position it occupies, and the fact of its being so well preserved, enhance its appearance, but it is unquestionably a most beautiful ruin. When I saw it after torrential rain, the tall columns were reflected in a deep pool of water that lay at the foot of the steps that once led up to the temple of Mercury ; passing round to the front and looking up at the portico, the deep colour of the stone against a sullen sky was most satisfying. The fine, fluted columns of the portico have Corinthian capitals ; they support an entablature and a pediment that is decorated by a relief of an eagle with extended wings holding a half-nude figure, the usual symbolic figure denoting a divinised emperor. In this case it probably refers to Lucius Verus, who died about the time of its erection. The temple is dedicated to the very good and very great Jupiter, Juno the Queen, and Minerva the August ; the donors in this case are two other members of the Marcius family.

Very little of the cella of this temple was left, but the frame and lintels of the doorway remained and have been compared to the best specimens of Greek art. As the whole edifice was very shaky, part of a wall was built up to make it safe. On the exterior of the cella are flutings in stucco to represent pilasters, a rare example of stucco used on the outer walls.

The neighbouring temple to Mercury was finished by Quintus Pacuvius Satorius and his wife Nehania, who added seventy thousand sesterces to the fifty thousand bequeathed by their son in his will. In this way, evidently, Thugga became possessed of the

amazing number of temples and sanctuaries of which we find the remains. Insignificant as the fact of the identity of a long-dead donor of a temple may be, it seems to carry one back into the atmosphere of the times. Even the names are suggestive. There is nothing peculiar about Quintus; but Nehania! Surely Nehania is an ancient Punic name that we have never met before.

Near to these temples there was a shrine to the deified Massinissa, who may often have taken refuge in his fortress of Thukka during his adventurous youth. There is something absolutely comic about the idea of a deified Massinissa, and it is impossible to look at the relief of his head in profile, under the inscription in the Museum of the Bardo, taken from this sanctuary, without a smile. Headstrong, passionate, clever, selfish, very human—the great King of the Massylians had little in common with a saint.

The western portion of the Forum has been called by the French the Place de la Rose des Vents, on account of a figure that is engraved on the flagstones. This is the Rose of the Winds that Vitruvius recommended every architect to place in a city in order to orient the streets so that they might escape the full blast of any prevalent wind. The figure consists of a large circle divided into four segments and subdivided into twenty-four sections. These dividing lines show the centre and the limit of each wind, and the names of all the winds are written round: Septentrio, Aquilo, Euroaquilo, Volturno, Eurus, Leuconotus, Auster, Libonotus, Africus, Favonius, Argestes Circius.



Vitruvius evidently knew what he was about, and no place in the world would profit more by his forethought than Northern Africa. The winds sweep over the sea and hurtle along the great plains with a violence unknown in countries that are differently situated. The Rose of the Winds is poetic in conception and eminently practical in its purpose.

There is one more temple that we must visit, and, even then, we are leaving out many that are well worth considering. The temple of Juno Cælestis, which was built in the early part of the third century A.D., is another of the examples of a divided worship. As usual, Tanit was connected with Juno, and the enclosure of the temple was in the form of the crescent moon that was her symbol. Within the enclosure was a sacred grove, in the middle of which stood the shrine in the form of a Greek temple. In front there was a terrace, and at the extremity of each horn of the outer wall a little shrine which probably contained the statue of the goddess.

One may wander up and down Dougga with profit and pleasure if the weather is kind; even when it is quite the contrary it is still most attractive. The bits of houses, the fluted pilasters of the Dar-al-Achab, the great staircase in the villa of the Trifolium, a bit of mosaic pavement, part of the old Numidian wall with a sturdy fragment of tower, a corner of Byzantine fortification overlapping a Roman building, a fountain with the legend "*Eros, omnia per te*" inscribed on it—any and all of these fragments of the past have a story to tell.

A mystic sign, such as the swastika or the crossed

poignards, engraved on the threshold of the house of the Trifolium, is quite as suggestive to what Léon l'Africain called "the curious mind" as would be a detailed visit to the ruins of Roman baths, seen many times before.

Of the two gateways that are left, that of Alexander Severus, popularly known as the Bab-ar-Roumia, is the most complete, while the gate of Septimius Severus has only partially restored portions of the two bases, standing on a paved way that joined the main road to Tebessa. The fragments of golden stone, shadowed by century-old olive-trees and seen against a distant view of mountains, form a fascinating study for the artist.

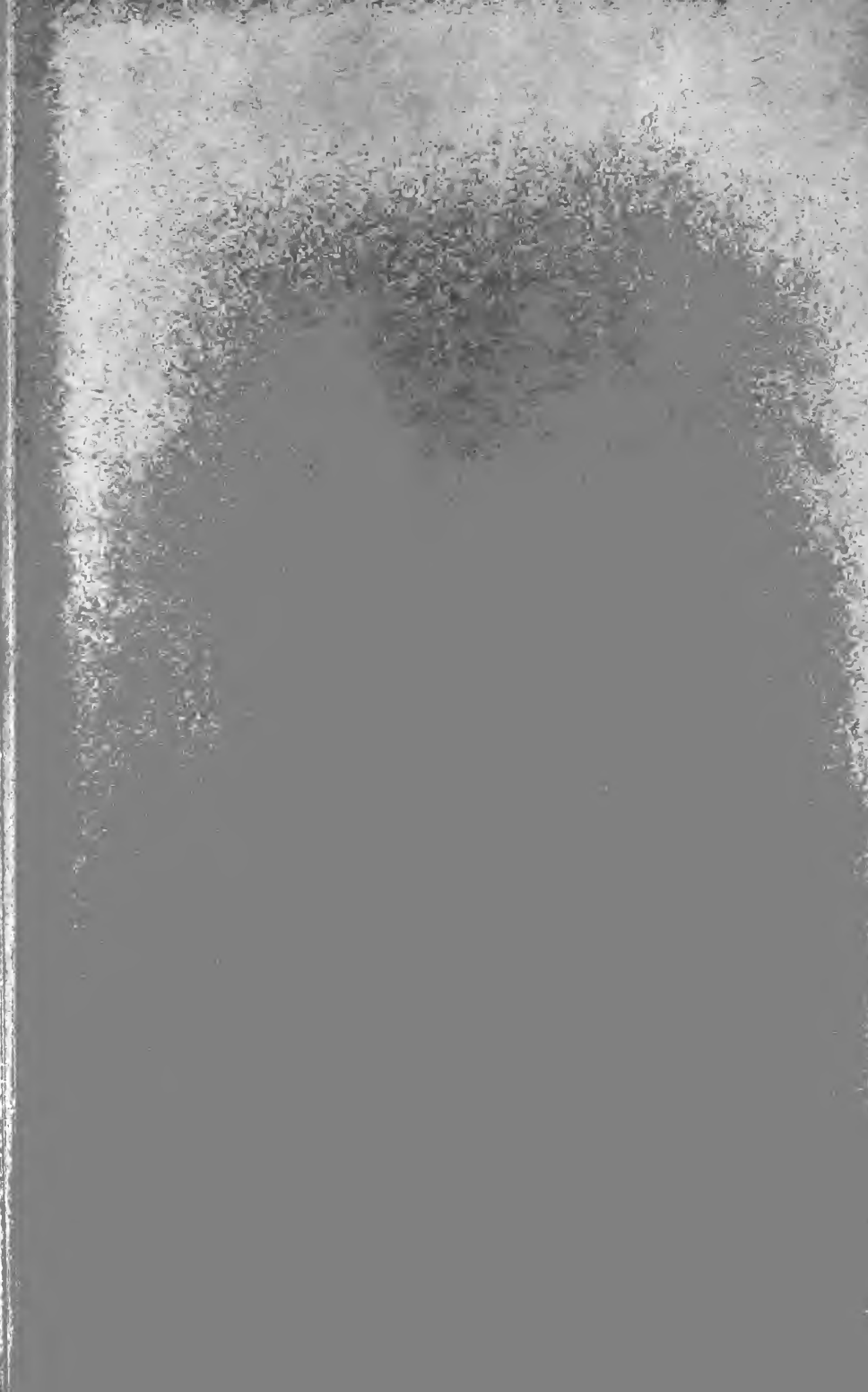
We have left the most interesting monument to the end, because it is rather out of the way, and also because it is different to anything that we have seen in Dougga or, indeed, in Africa. The Lybico-Punic monument is the one relic of Karthaginian art that escaped destruction, and it therefore stands alone. It has been compared to the so-called tomb of Absalom outside Jerusalem, and to other Semitic tombs in the Hauran; it is not in the least original, being derived from Egypt and Greece, a fact that tends to prove once more that the Karthaginians merely adapted the forms of art produced in other countries.

This tomb was in perfect preservation until a certain Sir Thomas Read, who was British Consul-General in the days before the French occupation, coveted the inscription for his bilingual collection of antiquities. In the casual way that people behaved in those days, for which we can find no excuse now, the Consul



*Benoula Plateau.*

THE LYBICO-PUNIC MONUMENT, DOUGGA.



ordered some Arabs to remove the inscription, and appears not even to have superintended the operation. The Arabs hacked the monument to pieces in their efforts to remove the slab, and the tomb has only recently been put together again. The restoration has been very skilfully done, but the inscription has found its way into the British Museum. It is written in Lybic and Punic, and gives the name of some important personage whose body never reposed in the tomb that was raised to his memory. His name was Alabân, son of Ifmatat, son of Falas. The date usually given is the fourth century B.C., but some authorities place it much further back.

The tomb is square at the base, and is surmounted by a pyramid, reminiscent of a type popular among the Egyptians of the eighteenth dynasty. M. H. Saladin, who has studied this unique specimen of the art of a vanished people, notes that the design, the heavy cornice, and the capitals are derived from Egypt, while the attic and the reliefs used to decorate the monument are copied from Greece.

The detailed study of this interesting monument made by Major Benton Fletcher gives a better idea of it than any words can do. It consists of three stories placed on a base of steps and flanked at the corners by pedestals on which statues of horsemen are placed. Ionic pilasters, archaic quadrigas, and winged victories form part of the scheme of decoration, and the pyramid is crowned by a lion. The sepulchral chamber was not in or immediately under the monument, and, I believe, has not yet been located.

Thugga prospered during the Roman occupation ;

in A.D. 118, it is spoken of as a "Pagus"; in the third and fourth centuries it is a *civitas* or a *municipium*; under Gallianus it is a "colony." Justinian built a citadel here and the great walls, but there is little known of the history of the city during the Byzantine epoch, except that it was the see of a bishop. Beginning with dolmens and megalithic remains, we have in Dougga specimens of Numidian work in the old wall, Punic stelæ, and the Lybico-Punic monument, besides the Greco-Roman and Byzantine ruins, giving a very comprehensive idea of the various styles of architecture that followed one another during the period of its prosperity.

When I think of Dougga I cannot help seeing it in a downpour of rain, the melancholy columns standing up against a leaden sky, reflected in pools of rain-water. Only the intense green of the soaked grass gave any note of colour as I sat in the car, just outside the theatre, waiting to start back to Tunis. What a downpour! Did it often rain like that in the days of Thugga's prosperity? Did the rain pour down into the uncovered areas of the temples and spoil the performance in the brand-new theatre set up by Publius Marcius Quadratus?

Sheets of rain fell pitilessly on the sodden ground, and the clouds drifted lower, enveloping the eagle's nest in a cold mist. Quite suddenly we also were in the clouds.

The mist filled the well of the theatre behind the columns, ghostly now in the gathering darkness; it crept between the columns; lay between us and them, until the old Berber stronghold seemed to suffer yet

another transformation before it vanished from our sight.

We left Dougga in the clouds, feeling uncertain whether or no we had really wandered up and down its grassy slopes or watched the reflections of the columns in the still water.

## CHAPTER VII

### CAMPS OF THE THIRD AUGUSTAN LEGION

#### *Haidra—Theveste—Lambæsis*

THERE is a certain fascination about the ruins which are scattered broadcast over Northern Africa. It is not only the situation in which many of them are placed, neither is it altogether the gorgeous colour bestowed on them by time; it is a combination of these features with a sense of the romance of their history.

It is not only the sight of great towns laid in ruins that affect us in this way. Often, when wandering through desolate country, where there seems to be no human habitation, some unexplained relic of the past confronts us. What is it? Nobody knows, yet it is part of the immense system of Rome's colonising or military expansion. An Arab village perched on part of a Byzantine fortress under which the older Roman foundations subsist is no uncommon sight, rising above the fields through which a Roman road once ran. And humbler ruins are constantly to be found behind which the majesty of Rome can be seen by those who care to look. Through all the country inland, as far as the great desert, Rome built cities and towns, made roads by the side of which were placed block-houses with tall towers from which the men on guard could signal to each other in case of





The Praetorium, Lambesis.



danger, as well as *fondouks* to house the traveller. And within the great desert itself she penetrated, founding cities in an oasis, carrying with her her life, her institutions, her civilisation, which were to be lost among the shifting sands in subsequent generations.

Rome did not annex the country that she had at her mercy after the destruction of Karthage ; she governed the land once owned by Karthage, answering to the modern Tunisia, but she left Massinissa King of Numidia and did not worry about farther Mauritania at all. After Cæsar decided to bring back Karthage to life, that part of the country was known as " Africa Vetus," while Numidia, taken from Juba I, because he sided with Pompey, became " Africa Nova." Augustus gave back Numidia to Juba II, but afterwards exchanged it for Mauritania, when it became evident that Numidia was sufficiently civilised to be of use to Rome. After Caligula had Juba II's son Ptolemy strangled in Rome, he annexed his dominions and Africa became one province. All these developments took time, and two hundred years passed between the destruction of Karthage and the occupation of Africa as a province of Rome.

It has been maintained by many writers that this gradual absorption of Africa into Roman civilisation was all to the good. The Romans came more as a friendly civilising people than as a conquering nation. Latin was spoken in the rich cities along the coast ; ambitious young men finished their education in Rome ; educated Africans became Europeanised. But it must be conceded that much time was lost and that the Roman legion, when it came to Africa, had great

difficulties to contend with in the opposition to any form of overrule shown by the uncivilised tribes of the mountains and the desert region.

When the Third Augustan Legion came to Africa, where it was destined to be in garrison for four hundred years, it had only just been enrolled, and the whole status of the army had just been revolutionised by the Emperor. The old Roman armies were enrolled for war and disbanded in times of peace, but Augustus made military service continuous, and as the term of service was twenty-seven years, the professional soldier had a career that lasted through the best years of his life. When he had completed his active service, he was eligible, as a veteran, to own a piece of land to which some sort of military service was attached. In this way the soldier became identified with his corps, its traditions were as sacred to him as those of his country or his religion, the camp was his home and was often the work of his hands, for the Roman soldier was a great builder.

In the days when moving bodies of men about was a difficult and costly operation as well as one taking up a great deal of time, a legion was apt to stay long in one place and the men became identified not only with the camp but with the surrounding country and the people they lived amongst.

In the case of the legion that was sent to keep peace and to make war in Africa, this was very much the case. At its full strength the Legion is estimated to have numbered twenty-seven thousand men, of which about half belonged to the auxiliary forces. The

whole force, with the exception of guards for the Pro-Consul at Karthage and small bodies of men posted about the country, was concentrated in one huge camp, following the usual Roman custom. It was a small enough force, considering the work to be accomplished.

The first camp was pitched at Ammædra, where the modern Haidra now stands, on the frontier between Tunisia and Algeria, and on the road between Sicca Veneria and Theveste. As the tribes to be brought to submission and the mountain passes to be defended lay farther south and west, the legion pushed forward and the camp was moved first to Theveste and then to Lambæsis, which remained the headquarters as long as Roman troops were to be found in Africa.

The legion arrived here early in the first century ; the earliest information that we have is an inscription concerning a road laid in the year A.D. 14 : a characteristic beginning to the great work of construction to which the Legion was to devote more time and energy than to that work of destruction which one associates with military operations.

The Third Augustan Legion was a little world in itself ; self-supporting, self-contained, trained to all the arts of peace as well as those of war. Citizens as well as soldiers, each had a trade, and over them a Prætor, who was not a soldier but the Overseer of the Works, presided. Under his direction and, no doubt, under the direction of his subordinates, the soldiers employed their time when they were not engaged in active operations or in drilling. They laid roads, ran drain-pipes, built aqueducts and cisterns,

as well as erecting those cities that we have come so far to see. Whether mending pipes or carving a capital for a column destined for a temple, the soldier was a trained workman. He not only built towns, he baked the bricks that he stamped with the seal of the Legion and he hacked the marble out of the quarries of Smittu.

When the tribes gave trouble, he was up against a most fatiguing and wearing form of war. The long wars waged against Rome by Jugurtha were of the guerilla order and so were the raids of Tacfarinas, which kept the Legion busy for seven years. This clever leader of half-savage tribes dressed his men up like Roman soldiers, but he kept to native methods of warfare, hiding among the mountains to descend on the troops when he got an opportunity, running away if he were beaten, poisoning the springs and burning the harvests, as occasion served.

Without the glory of a big victory or even the excitement of a great defeat, this incessant warfare of ambushes and vain pursuits had little to recommend it, and it must have been a great relief when the nimble Tacfarinas was finally killed and his troops dispersed.

The Roman remains at Haidra, interesting as they are, cannot be compared to those of the Byzantine period, and the same may be said of Theveste, where the Legion removed towards the end of the first century of our era. At Haidra we have an arch of triumph that has been enclosed by a wall, part of which is still standing ; it was built in the reign of Septimius Severus and has served as a dungeon. At Theveste we have the fine tetrastyle arch of Caracalla and a temple that

has been compared to the Maison Carré at Nismes. But neither one nor the other can compare with the vast Byzantine citadel of one or the Byzantine fortifications and basilica of the other.

The Basilica of Theveste, the modern Tebessa, is the most complete specimen known of a Christian church with all its dependencies ; the walls round the town, with remains of great towers, are still most impressive. We realise, looking at it, what a power the Christian Church became during the hundred years of the Byzantine occupation.

The African Church was then the first of all the Christian Churches ; it was "easily the primate," as the Papal Bull stated ; African Fathers of the Church, like Augustine, who led his generation, or Tertullian, who made Latin the language of the Church, or Cyprian, who died in the amphitheatre of Karthage, had built up this great structure. We do not think so much of the Roman soldiers in either of these places as of the saints and bishops of a later dispensation or the sufferings of the early martyrs during Roman rule.

We have spoken of the excellent system adopted in the camps and of the conciliatory attitude of the Romans towards the natives, whose gods they welcomed into their own sanctuaries. This spirit was absent in all dealings with the pernicious sect of the Christians, who were always persecuted and suppressed. Those of them who were working in the mines under Roman supervision sent letters from time to time to Bishop Cyprian. In one of these the writer says that the Christians were so comforted by a letter that he had sent to them that they no longer felt the stroke

of the lash or remembered that their feet were bound. The horrible mountains appeared smiling, the disgusting smell of the lamps in the dark galleries became like that of sweetly scented flowers.

The Christians, for their part, had not always been conciliatory. In Tipaza, a town on the coast between Algiers and Oran, there are the ruins of a basilica erected in honour of St. Salsa. Salsa was a girl of fourteen who was a devout Christian living at the beginning of the fourth century. This child had a particular aversion to a brazen dragon with a gilded head and jewelled eyes that was greatly venerated by the Pagans.

One day, when the people had been dancing in honour of the god and decorating the temple with wreaths of laurel and branches of myrtle, the festival ended in worshippers and priests becoming very drunk. When they had fallen asleep, the brave girl walked into the temple, pushed aside the painted veil that hung before the sanctuary, seized the creature's gilded head from which the wreaths fell, and hurled it into the sea.

So deep was the slumber of the revellers that her deed was undiscovered until it was too late to track the impious desecrator of a popular shrine. She might have escaped punishment if she had not been obsessed by the desire to get rid of the dragon's body; she could not rest as long as the brazen scales remained in the temple. So one day she stole into the temple, seized the body in her arms and dragged it to the edge of the sea, toppling it over, we imagine, with a considerable effort. The noise attracted the attention of



the guardians; Salsa was seized, beaten and bruised, before she was thrown into the sea after the brazen dragon.

The sea took care of the saint's body, the waves were gentle, the tide took her quietly into port, and a Gaul who came up in his ship was told that he must bury the "pearl of Christ," which he did, placing it in a humble shrine.

Theveste was not occupied by the Karthaginians until the beginning of the first Punic War; it was, however, an important city when the Third Augustan Legion made it their camp, becoming a colony under Trajan. Solomon, the indefatigable Byzantine general who succeeded Belisarius, had his headquarters here, building fortifications and repairing those broken down, as we have seen. The Byzantines were regular iconoclasts; they were worse than the Vandals who threw down buildings and left them there, because they utilised the old material in such a way that it could not be set up again. The priest who bought a Roman house for building material for his hospital is a typical case in point. The actual town is still enclosed within Solomon's enceinte, round which one can still walk on the raised footway; the Roman basilica, vestiges here and there of Roman masonry, the vestiges also of eight Roman roads that met here, can all be traced, and there are some inscriptions dealing with the doings of the Legion.

There is a good deal to amuse the owner of a "curious mind" in Theveste. Justinian ordered the rebuilding of the city in the same year that he laid the foundations of St. Sophia, and the dome erected by his General

Solomon here is one of the earliest specimens to be found in Northern Africa.

The temple ascribed to Minerva, because some of her emblems are to be found in the decoration, has the cella intact with a portico of four columns of the Corinthian order and a heavy, highly decorated architrave. This is divided into panels, on which are sculptured eagles with outspread wings holding serpents in their beaks and other warlike symbols, while Victories decorate the attic. There is no pediment, and the whole effect is over-decorated and heavy. Since the French occupation the temple has been used as a soap factory, an office, a Moslem tribunal, a canteen, a military club and a church. It is now a museum.

But it is not until we come to Lambæsis that we really get in touch with the Third Augustan Legion. It was built by their hands from the foundations, and no one, seeing it, could doubt that it had been designed by a military architect.

The position of the new camp was admirably chosen. It stood on a plateau protected by the northern slopes of the Aures Mountains, that great chain which forms a barrier between the Tell and the desert. On the other side lay the mysterious Sahara, about which all sorts of stories were told: the waterless Sahara inhabited by nomad tribes and strange beasts. A picturesque gorge pierced the mountains, beginning near Lambæsis and ending at Al Kantara, the gate of the Sahara; according to the legend it had been formed by a kick from Hercules, hence the name "Calceus Herculis." This important advanced post



PEDIMENT OF THE TEMPLE, SBEITLA.



was guarded by a company of auxiliaries from Palmyra.

The camp was built on the usual plan, that of a great rectangle enclosed by a wall rounded at the corners and flanked by towers, which, curiously enough, projected inwards instead of outwards. Two roads cut across it at right angles, leading to four gateways, one of which is still standing ; where the roads meet there still stands the shell of a great building, which is the most striking object in Lambæsis to-day. This building, usually called the Prætorium, is very well preserved ; the principal façade is to the north, in which there is a monumental gate flanked by Corinthian columns and empty niches, on which are various military designs in relief, such as Victories bearing palms and eagles.

The great building is not beautiful in itself ; it was built when art was distinctly decadent, but it is immensely impressive, standing up, as it does, alone among the ruins of what was once a flourishing city, and it has the beauty of old stone, mellowed by time and wind and rain as well as by sunshine.

Besides the unusual and impressive appearance of the Prætorium, it is interesting from a purely human point of view. It was the official residence of the Legate of the Legion, and as religion and authority were always connected by Rome, an altar once stood before the principal entrance. From the fact that no fragments of roof were found among the rubbish inside the walls, it is concluded that it was open to the sky, and that this portion of the palace was used for outdoor ceremonies.

One very interesting feature of the Prætorium  
HA

consists of the rooms at the back of this great courtyard, which were evidently used as club-rooms for different grades of men. The names engraved in the stone were *optiones*, lieutenants; *cornicines*, cornice players; *tesserares*, sergeant-majors; and *speculatores*, scouts. These *scholæ*, or clubs, were associations which brought together men of the same rank, who paid a certain sum annually, which was refunded when they left the service.

The Legion was, of course, composed of Roman citizens, whether born in Italy or elsewhere; the auxiliary forces which always accompanied a legion might be drawn from the ranks of Roman citizens or from those of foreigners who had not that privilege. About two kilometres from the great camp we find the remains of this camp of the auxiliaries.

The Via Septimiana starts from the eastern gate, passes open country and then through an arch of triumph with three openings, which still preserves a fine appearance, and arrives at a mass of ruins that was once the town of Lambæsis. This town began as an abode of the usual hangers-on of a camp, grew into a village, then a town with the resounding name *Respublica Lambæsitānorum*, possessing a Capitol, two Forums, and various public buildings. Finally it was greatly increased as to population when Septimius Severus allowed it to become the married quarters of the Legion. M. G. Boissière, in whose works there is much interesting information concerning the Legion and its history, as it is revealed by the numerous inscriptions found in the camp, thinks that this move was not altogether for the good. Not only was

discipline relaxed, but the camp was no longer the first object in the men's affections. However that may be, the inscriptions prove that the soldiers were devoted to the city-camp built by their predecessors and added to by each generation ; they often subscribed to give a column or a statue, to adorn a temple or to commemorate some action in the Forum ; they always appear to wish to return to Lambæsis to end their days if they have been sent abroad on promotion. There is no doubt that these men, born and brought up in Africa, many of them of mixed race or even of pure African stock, took the greatest pride in their camp, with its fine public buildings and its wide open spaces.

One of the great events that took place at Lambæsis was the visit of the Emperor Hadrian during his second visit to Africa in the year 128 ; one can imagine the excitement it caused. The much-travelled Emperor, always visiting remote parts of his vast dominions, was probably his own best ambassador. His travels brought him into contact with all sorts of people and gave him an opportunity of knowing something of the real condition of affairs.

To the Third Legion, brought up in the tradition of royalty, with the statues of successive Cæsars in all their public places, this materialisation of the head of the empire must have been most inspiring. And Hadrian was apparently delighted with all he saw, for he wrote a long and elaborate " Order of the Day " in which he praised the work done by the men in building the camp—they had only been there about two years—praised their road-making, spoke of the

two occasions on which the Legion had changed quarters, showing that he had followed its history, and expressed himself delighted with the manner in which the manœuvres, performed in his honour, had been executed. This curious document is now in the Louvre.

Only twice, in its long history, did the Legion get into trouble—once, after the death of Nero, a certain Legate of the Legion, Lucius Clodius Macer, constituted himself a champion of the Republic and prevailed on the army to support him, giving it a new name, the “*Prima Liberatrix Macriana*”; Vitellius reconstituted it under the old name when the great plot of Clodius Macer fell through. The second time it was more serious. For supporting the cause of Maximinus against the first Gordian Emperor, the Legion appears to have been disbanded, and it was fifteen years before it was restored with the old name and the old honours.

With the reign of Caligula a new *régime* came to Numidia, which was detached from Karthage, and placed under an imperial Legate. Caligula was probably right in placing a military governor, and his own agent, over a country that boasted the headquarters of an African army of occupation; it was a curious anomaly that the only province containing a standing army should have been for so long under a civil ruler. But it certainly ended in causing a good deal of friction between the rival powers.

The Pro-Consul of Africa appointed by the Senate lived in Karthage in great state, attended by twelve lictors and followed by a crowd of secretaries and



officials that would have done justice to Geneva. He had all the pomp and circumstance of power but very little of its real essence, because the Legate of Numidia had usurped many of his prerogatives. The Legate lived among his soldiers ; his appointment lasted for a considerable time, in consequence of which he brought his wife and family and settled down in Africa. The Pro-Consul, on the other hand, elected every year, was always a newcomer ; he was less well known than his rival, and frequently gave way when interests clashed. We have, it will be noticed, come a long way from the time when the Roman Governor was a Roman citizen, neither military nor civil, but eligible for any great appointment, provided he had fitted lesser posts, mounting up, step by step, to the highest honours.

The finest temple in Lambæsis was that dedicated to Æsculapius and the Goddess Salus (Hygeia). It was held in great honour by the soldiers who deposited their records here and who added a building that appears to have been some sort of hospital. Begun in the early part of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, it was solemnly dedicated by the Imperial Legate of Numidia, Rufinus, in the year A.D. 162. There are only a few fluted columns left standing now on some steps, from which a fine view of the field of ruins can be obtained, but it is possible to trace some points of interest. A mausoleum to a Præfect of the Legion, Flavius Maximus, that was found in the camp in a state of ruin, was pieced together again by the French, and the ashes buried under the restored monument, before which a whole battalion of French infantry

filed, while a salute was fired in honour of this brother-in-arms who had died in the service of his country on foreign soil so many centuries ago. Unfortunately the Arabs heard of this little ceremony and rifled the tomb for the treasure that they expected lay hidden.

To most people the Prætorium is the most interesting monument in Lambæsis and many will return there after walking over the enclosure. Within the walls we find the chapel where the soldiers placed their eagles, and the little club-rooms where they assembled in their leisure hours, while, on the other side of the road, facing the Prætorium, there are remains of many buildings. Some of these have been identified as officers' quarters, barracks, stables, coach-houses for war chariots, shops, and, of course, baths. Lambæsis cannot compete with some other of the "Golden Cities of Northern Africa," as far as artistic merit goes, but it certainly teems with human interest.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TIMGAD

MANY writers have described the ruined cities of Latin Africa, but few have expressed their admiration as eloquently as has M. Louis Bertrand, the well-known author of *Les Villes d'Or*. "Scorched by centuries of sunshine, buried under sand, clay, and rubbish," he writes of the golden cities that he loves so well, "they have taken on the ochre colouring of clay, the ivory and dull gold of bones and marbles recently excavated, the warm, ruddy tints of walls that have been for ages gilded and painted by the southern sun. This golden tone becomes more or less intense and vivid according to the position of the ruins, whether they be placed nearer to the sea or the desert, whether the sojourn under the earth has been longer or shorter. But, seen afar off or near at hand, they appear to be all gold. They are golden cities alike to the sight and the imagination; they are the dead cities of Latin Africa—towns, cities and colonies—of which the remains stand sentinel on the African soil over a space of some five hundred miles, from Moroccan Volubiles to Tunisian Gigthi—from the Atlantic Ocean to the land of the Lotus-eaters.

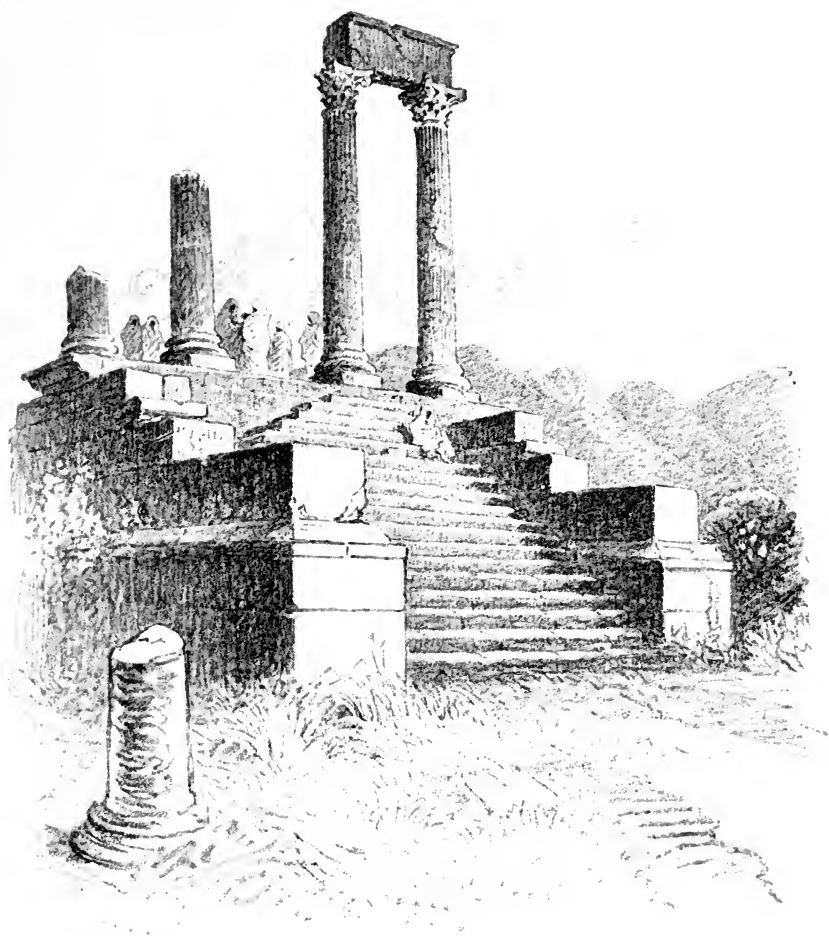
"The golden cities are contrasted, in a very striking manner, with the white cities of Islam."

Timgad has been called the African Pompeii—a title that is appropriate. Not only can we walk about

the town, up and down the paved streets, in and out of the houses and shops, the temples and the market-place of Timgad, as we might do in Pompeii, but we are struck by the fact that somewhat the same fate overtook the two cities. The destruction of Timgad was less dramatic, but it had somewhat the same features. Burnt by the Arabs for fear the Greeks should fortify themselves within its walls, the ruins were covered with cinders, and then by degrees buried under the sand blown by the hamseen winds from the desert and the earth washed down from the mountains by torrential rain ; on the top of the rubbish, vegetation grew and covered up the once populous city.

The first to pay any attention to the ruins of Timgad was the British explorer Bruce, who found calcined wood and blackened marble among the remains, which made him think that fire had been used as a destructive agent. Bruce, who was British Consul-General at Algiers, visited Timgad in 1765 ; the notes that he made then and the sketches that he executed show how much the ruins have deteriorated since that time. This is notably the case regarding the five columns of the Capitoline Temple, which he drew with the architrave still in place. Colonel R. L. Playfair, then Consul-General at Algiers, the author of *Murray's Guide to Algeria*, published notes and sketches in a book he named *In the Footsteps of Bruce* over a hundred years after they had been made by the explorer.

Timgad is not a city of the first importance, but it is one that amply repays excavation. Partly owing to the circumstance of its fall, it is uncommonly well



*Boston Halston.*

TEMPLE OF THE CAPITOL, TIMGAD.



preserved, and presents a most interesting picture of a provincial Roman city at the beginning of the second century of our era.

Timgad was built by the Third Augustan Legion, that is always said to have been in residence at Lambæsis, only fourteen kilometres off, during the building operations. As these were begun in the year A.D. 100, and the great camp at Lambæsis only dates from 123, a detachment of the Legion must have been drafted over for the purpose before the final move from Theveste was effected.

Timgad, the ancient Thamugadi, was built on a spur of Mount Morris in a valley formed by the Oued Merien and Ain Morris ; it stood on the northern slopes of the great chain of the Aures Mountains, which divide the Tell from the Desert. It was a small city, well laid out on free ground, for the little village that stood there was soon destroyed. Fairly and squarely the architect laid out the main lines of a city that was divided by broad roads and intersected by small ones—that had all the usual features of a Roman town, without the peculiarities that arose from one built on a mountain-peak like Dougga or rebuilt among older buildings.

The first sight of Timgad, lying under a veil of sunshine, surrounded by a plain ringed round with mountains, shows a mass of mutilated columns from which the great arch of Trajan stands up conspicuously. The colour of the scene is perhaps the most wonderful part of it, for the landscape is glowing with sombre colour, while the stone and marble seem to take on a more golden hue here than elsewhere, partly due to the fact that a great variety of stone is used.

The almost invariable plan followed in Roman colonial cities is found here. East and west a broad road cuts the town, the Decumanus Maximus, which is crossed by a road running north and south, the Cardo. Near the intersection of these roads the Forum and some of the principal buildings stand.

The usual route followed is by the north entrance and up the Cardo to the cross-roads by the Forum, where we may pause for a moment and take a look round.

The broad, flat paving-stones of the Decumanus Maximus are set obliquely to lessen the shock of the heavy-wheeled traffic of the day; they are composed of bluish limestone taken from the mountains north of the town, a hard, resistant stone suitable to a road that was part of the highway between Lambæsis and Theveste. The paving might have been laid yesterday, were it not for the deep ruts made by the chariot-wheels; there are raised footpaths on either side, and drains to carry off the torrential rain with perforated stone slabs, through which they can be inspected. This great main thoroughfare was once adorned by a long colonnade on either side, under the shelter of which the citizens could walk in any weather. Just before the wall which once encircled the town we see, to westward, the arch of Trajan.

Of all the many arches set up in Africa, this one is certainly the finest. The architecture is good, the decoration is well finished, the combination of different stones and of marble gives it a very rich effect. It is chiefly composed of local sandstone, but white limestone and marble are also used with good effect.



The middle arch is surmounted by an entablature ; over the side arches are circular pediments of rather an uncommon type. In the attic is an inscription that tells us all about the origin of Thamugadi, over which there was probably a group of figures with a quadriga. The inscription sets forth that the Emperor Cæsar Nerva Trajan Augustus Germanicus, son of the divine Nerva, Sovereign Pontiff, vested for the fourth time with the Tribunal office, three times Consul, father of the country, founded the Colonia Marciana Trajana of Thamugadi, the work of the Third Augustan Legion, Lucius Munatius Gallus being Imperial Legate and proprætor. As Trajan was elected Consul for the third time in the year A.D. 100, the date of the founding of the colony is fixed.

Returning to the point we started from at the intersection of the two main roads, after passing interesting ruins of shops that had an entrance to the street and a back entrance at a higher level into the Forum, we find what remains of the once monumental entrance to the centre of civic life in Timgad.

The Forum is of the usual type ; it has colonnades round three sides, and some important buildings on the fourth, which is also the western side. Under the eastern portico two large doors led into a basilica, a large hall without aisles, which had bays decorated by Ionic pilasters supporting a superior order of Corinthian type. Along the south wall is a platform where the judges sat, behind which were rooms where the archives were stored and vestments kept, and opposite this tribunal are the bases of pedestals for

statues in honour of Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus Pius and Hadrian's son, Ælius Cæsar.

On the western side we find the Curia—the Town Hall of Thamugadi—where the councillors sat to deliberate on matters connected with the town. There is also a platform with traces of fixings that once held metal balustrades. Among the inscriptions we see one dedicated to the Concord of the Municipal Council, proving that this building was used as a Senate; there were also two interesting records in the shape of slabs engraved with the names of the Decuriones at different dates, which are now in the Louvre. It must have been a fine room when the walls were covered with marble of various colours; a projecting skirting is still seen which formed part of the decoration.

The interesting part of the so-called Temple of Victory consists not so much in the building itself as in the rostrum which is part of the temple enclosure. This platform had a balustrade round it on the side looking to the Forum, from which it was raised about twelve feet. Four steps led up to the pronaos of the temple, which was approached from the street-level by a side staircase. At the two extremities of the platform were hexagonal pedestals with statues of Victories, to which the balustrade was attached. From this eminence a public orator, or any person having to make a speech, could deliver his message; a funeral oration, a political outburst, or any communication of importance, was made from this place.

The Capitoline Temple, standing on rising ground just outside the old walls, is a ruin that is truly great in its decay. Colossal in size, majestic in design, and



*Ernest Hébert.*

TEMPLE OF THE CAPITOL, DJEMILA.



well finished as to the detail of the carving of capitals, it must have presented a splendid appearance when the beautiful marble, fluted columns stood up on the pronaos. Only two of these have been re-erected recently ; for the most part they lie on the ground—fragments of the great drum of a column, capitals with the bold and graceful acanthus-leaves as sharp in detail as if they had been executed yesterday.

The Romans oriented their temples in accordance with the exact position of the rising sun on the day when the foundations were begun to be laid ; the position is, therefore, not exactly the same. The Capitoline Temple stood north-east, while the Temple of Victory inclined more exactly to the east. The peculiarity of the Roman method of orienting their temples often made them stand rather awkwardly, not quite plumb with the line of the street. This is the case with the Capitoline Temple of Thamugadi. The importance given to the propylæa is another feature of this temple, which was also notable for the richness of the marbles used and the fine work in detail. Rather a curious case in point is the architrave that has a design of children dancing, the eyes filled in with lead.

Thamugadi had, of course, a theatre, which is still in a good state of preservation ; it had magnificent baths, and many temples, but the only buildings that need detain us here are those that are out of the common. One of these is an archæological curiosity.

It has always been known that libraries existed in Roman towns, but until this one was discovered it was a matter of conjecture how these libraries were

arranged. Curiously enough, almost at the same time that the library of Thamugadi was discovered another one was brought to light at Ephesus in Asia.

There is luckily no doubt as to the attribution, and the way that the inscription, telling us the story, was found, is an archæological romance.

Some years ago a piece of an inscription was dug up which was not intelligible in itself ; a year later another piece was found, which fitted in, but did not quite explain the context ; two years later a third bit turned up, and the inscription was complete.

“ Following a legacy left by M. Julius Quintinianus Flavius Rogatiamus, of Senatorial rank, to the Treasury of the Colony of Thamugadi, his native city, the library was built for the sum of 400,000 sesterces.”

If we turn back from the Forum and walk down the Northern Cardo we find on the second block to the right a group of columns and some steps that lead up into a court, through which we pass into a large, semi-circular room. Over the entrance door is a niche which once held a great statue of Minerva, the head of which has been found near by. Inside we find a well-paved floor and walls lined with cupboards, or niches, in which, presumably, the manuscripts were kept, while a balustraded gallery ran round the room to give access to the cupboards. It is generally supposed that an upper storey once existed, which would have contained another series of cupboards, also that manuscripts were stored in the three rooms

adjoining the reading-room. The walls were probably decorated with medallions and busts representing literary celebrities, and there must have been desks and seats for the use of readers. Given the difference in costume, the appearance of the reading-room, when students were poring over the manuscripts and attendants were fetching others from the cupboards, cannot have differed very much from that presented by any provincial public library to-day.

It is roughly estimated that about twenty-three thousand volumes could have been kept here, and one would much like to know what sort of books were popular with the readers. They must have been Latin and Greek books chiefly, the languages of learning, and it is unlikely that any of those Punic books, dispersed after the destruction of Karthage, would have found their way into a city that had sprung into being as suddenly as had Minerva herself and had, consequently, few links with the past. That the readers were not all serious people we may assume, because the remarks that they scribbled on the columns were not at all erudite, having more connection with love than learning. Perhaps they enjoyed reading Apuleius's *Golden Ass* as much as a treatise on divination.

The other building that is interesting because of its originality is a market that was the gift of another good citizen of Thamugadi, another African with a Latinised name. It was for some time the only specimen of a Roman provincial market in existence. It stands near the arch of Trajan, and was the gift of Marcus Plotius Faustus, surnamed Sertius, a Roman

knight, commander of auxiliary forces, and an Imperial flamen, and of his wife, Cornelia Valentina Tucciana.

Leaving the main street, we pass up some steps to a court in which a row of columns have been re-set up, beyond which is the market, with its colonnades and its beautifully paved flooring and its singularly rich decoration. The most interesting points are the shops and a table which contained measures for liquids. One end of the market, which is semi-circular in form, was once covered over ; it stands a little higher than the rest of the hall, and has shops radiating out like the spokes of a wheel. These little shops have each a slab fixed horizontally between the blue granite door-posts, which served as a table ; as it was immovable, the salesman had to dive under it when he arrived in the morning with his wares and when taking away what was unsold in the evening. Pillars supported arches that decorated this end of the market, with magnificent brackets over which were little columns and an entablature that received the timbers of the ceiling. A statue of Cornelia Valentina, found here, has been removed to the museum : no doubt there was also one representing her husband, the donor of the market.

On the other side of the town, just on what was once the ramparts of the old wall, we find the delightful house once lived in by this couple. Like other houses built after the law against parti-walls was promulgated in Rome, because of the terrible fire in A.D. 64, this house occupied a whole "island." Like the houses in Pompeii, this villa was built round an atrium and a peristyle ; it has few paintings, but is far richer in



mosaic than any house in the Etruscan city. In the centre of the peristyle there is a large basin, which has another basin beneath it connected by pipes, that was apparently arranged for the fish to take refuge in when the upper basin became too hot at midday.

When Sertius came back from service abroad, he wanted to end his days in his native town, and we imagine that he built the house then. As an old soldier who had knocked about the world, he must have enjoyed the peace of a life that he could arrange to suit his own tastes. We can picture him walking up to the baths in the morning, where he would go through the series of operations that made him feel as fresh and healthy as he had done ten years ago—cold douche, hot air, massage, friction with oil, cooling process—leaving him ready for the principal meal of the day. Lying on a couch in the cool triclinium in his charming house, with perhaps a couple of friends to talk over old campaigns or the latest news of the wild men in the mountains, who had set fire to some cornfields the night before. Perhaps he would stroll up to the Forum in the cool of the evening, because in the Forum one heard all the news: politics, scandal, town gossip, the latest news from Rome, military gossip from an old acquaintance who has ridden over from Lambæsis, a word with one of the Decuriones who has been cooped up in the Town Hall for some hours listening to the greatest bore on the Council.

A genial soul, I picture him, with a kind word for everyone. As he crossed the Forum, perhaps he stopped to watch some youths playing a game on a

marked-out square of the pavement. Rather an original game apparently, for the space in the middle of the square was roughly engraved with a design of a basket surmounted by birds, on either side of which was a chessboard, each square of the board being engraved with a letter. The six words that formed the legend must have been written by a wag or a cynic; they read "*Venari, lavari, ludari, ridere, occ est vivere,*" which may be interpreted: "To hunt, to bathe, to gamble, to laugh, that is life!" Sertius is no cynic; he laughs in his easy-going way and goes on down the streets of shining columns, beyond which the sunset flames on the sombre hills, making them like fire, thinking maybe of the problems of life or the supper of lampreys and rough wine that awaits him.

As he nears home he may meet one of the priests of the Temple of the Capitol, who would stop to talk to the perpetual flamen, telling him of the latest outbreak of those contemptible people who refuse to sacrifice to the gods and who call themselves Christians. An obstinate set that must be exterminated. Sertius, no doubt, agreed with this assertion, as who would not in his position? But I do not think that it disturbed his digestion, and I feel sure that he slept the sleep of one who has come satisfactorily through yet another agreeable and well-filled day.

Thamugadi is said to be a city without a history, which is true as far as the few hundred years of her prosperity are concerned; but, when once history began to materialise, there was too much of it for the safety of the city, which was swept away and buried

under the avalanche of wars that followed the rising to power of the Christians.

It is curious to reflect how short a span of life was allotted to most of these African cities compared to that enjoyed by famous cities of Europe, where century after century leaves its mark on the architecture and the story of civic life is continuous. Each city that we visit has a different character, in spite of the invariable system of city-planning adopted by the Romans ; each had a different story ; but most of them are alike in having enjoyed a few hundred years of civilisation and prosperity sandwiched between obscurity and oblivion. The end came differently to each one.

Religion was at the bottom of the troubles that clouded all the latter part of Thamugadi's existence, and it was the cause of the final catastrophe. The early Christian Church in Africa was, it will be remembered, ruined by the seditions that rose up. The Africans were sincere believers, but independent, argumentative, intensely combative. They were only too ready to fight to the death with anyone who opposed their convictions ; they sacrificed to their prejudices the whole future, not only of Christianity, but of civilisation. The empire of Rome in the Western World fell to pieces ; the eastern empire never did for Christianity what old Rome had accomplished for paganism. The hundred years of Byzantine rule in Africa were torn by internal conflicts.

Karthage began, long before Belisarius landed in Africa, to teach Christianity modified by the Arian sedition. Arius, born probably in Cyrenaica about A.D. 280, developed a heresy concerning the diuinity

of Christ, arguing that three of the Gospels placed Him lower than God the Father, and that therefore the doctrine of the Trinity was nullified. This heresy gained ground in many parts of the world, but was chiefly prevalent in Africa. The question was no doubt debated in Thamugadi, but what chiefly affected the city of Trajan was the powerful sect of the Donatists, that had been started during the persecutions in the reign of Diocletian, and had come to a head in Karthage, always the home of sedition.

In this case the point at issue concerned the Sacrament; the Donatists maintained that its efficacy depended on the sanctity of the officiating priest, and they used all their influence to get this doctrine adopted by the Church. When arguments failed they took to violence. The Orthodox party put up Cecilian as Bishop of Karthage in A.D. 311; the Donatists elected Marjorum: Africa was divided into two parties. When Marjorum died, the Donatists elected Donat, the second of that name, to the episcopal see, and the Orthodox put up a rival. Donat was a very persistent and strong-minded individual; for thirty years he stood up against Councils and Synods and the authority of Rome. After Constant, the son of Constantine the Great, banished him from Africa, there was peace for a time, but the Donatists came back from exile when Julian the Apostate reigned, and the quarrel began again.

Julian the Apostate, his eyes filled with the glamour of the old gods and his heart true to the pagan tradition that he had imbibed from his masters of philosophy, was inclined to be lenient to the warring sects of



THE THEATRE, TINGAD.

*Arthur Johnston.*



Christianity. He allowed the banished Donatists to return, but they were coldly received by the Orthodox. In Thamugadi, which had become the headquarters of Donatism, Bishop Optat, the Donatist Bishop, received the exiles with honour, to the scandal of the opposite party.

After the Donatists became once more powerful, they were joined by a set of lawless bandits known as the Circoncellians, a name derived from two Latin words, signifying surrounding farms. This title appears to have been well earned, as their habit was to rove about the country and surround some unprotected farm, which they robbed and often destroyed entirely. The battle-cry of these ruffians was "*Laude Deo*"; it became a terror in all the countryside round Thamugadi, which was the chosen refuge of the Circoncellians.

An example of the methods employed by these hooligans is given in G. Mercier's *Histoire de l'Afrique Septentrionale*. A party of Circoncellians, he writes, led by a couple of Donatists, set out to sack a basilica belonging to the Orthodox Christians. Finding the doors locked, they climbed on to the roof and pelted the congregation with tiles, seriously injuring many of them; two deacons, who defended the altar, were killed. "*Laude Deo*" indeed; we can almost hear their battle-cry as the tiles rained down on the terrified worshippers.

The sect, against which Augustine had written some of his most powerful protests, was given its death-blow at the Council of Karthage of 411, but Thamugadi never recovered from the years of incessant fighting,

and her luck was decidedly out. When Belisarius came, with the Byzantine forces, and won the battle of Tricameron over the Vandals in 533, the local tribes burnt Thamugadi to prevent the Greeks establishing themselves there.

Solomon, commanding the troops after Belisarius left, did eventually take possession of the place, and he built a fortress with materials taken from the ruins, and erected basilicas and some other buildings, all at the expense of the Roman city.

Thamugadi had a certain restricted importance during the Byzantine rule, but fell a prey afterwards to Arabs and Berbers, and an earthquake threw down some of the still standing columns towards the end of the seventh century. Between that date and the excavations recently carried out by the French, the golden city of Trajan slept under the earth.



## CHAPTER IX

### SUSA

SUSA, the Hadrumetum of the ancients, lies on the eastern coast of Tunisia, about a hundred miles from the capital. It can be reached very comfortably in a day by car, without an unduly early start and with plenty of time to spare on arrival ; a degenerate way of travelling in the East, perhaps, but one which has its advantages. Let those who have unlimited time to spare, if there still be any such lucky mortals in these hustling times, and plenty of money to pay for their luxuries, which is perhaps almost as rare, choose the caravan rather than the car. There will still be less favoured individuals who will prefer the latter, which takes them swiftly over the ground. When it comes to desert travelling, there is no doubt that the leisurely journey by caravan with the tents set up at night makes the ideal method, given plenty of time. Then, indeed, the most restless spirit can become one with the surroundings, wrapped round by the curious fatality, by the intimate strange charm of the waste places of the earth.

The road between Tunis and Susa is never dull, and the surrounding country is always interesting, but it can be quite well appreciated while motoring. The road lies between a cultivated expanse of rolling plain that often mounts up into hills on either side. The cultivation of the land forms a strange contrast to the

solitude of the country, for we saw few people at work and hardly a sign of human habitation. The road itself is a long, long white line, amazingly straight, running apparently from nowhere to the Never-Never Land. We pass cornfields in which olive-trees are planted here and there and bits of land with vines planted in rows like cabbages; every now and then an unexplained and possibly unexplainable ruin crowns the top of one of the hills. Sometimes we pass some men riding donkeys; once we came on the track of a country cart half across the road, driven by a man apparently asleep. We hooted and hooted again; he took no notice. A last desperate hoot, like the last trumpet for vehemence, roused him. He turned round, making a large sweeping gesture over the cornfield, which said as plainly as any words could have done:

“Why do you disturb me, when you have the whole country to run over?”

Then he moved slowly to one side, no doubt consigning us to Baal Ammon or to one of the old gods whose power for good and evil is still believed in by the unchanging Berbers.

After Muhammedia, we come on the glorious remains of the great aqueduct that brought water from Zaghouan to the cisterns of La Malga in Karthage, a distance of about fifty-seven miles. The road runs alongside this great monument of the past for some distance, and after a time we pass by the Roman archway that guards the entrance to Zaghouan. There being plenty of time, we may pass through it and visit the still beautiful semi-circular basin which held the water from

the Djebel Zaghouan that was passed on from thence into the aqueduct. Above it is the remains of a colonnade that was part of the shrine erected to the guardian of the place, and around it are the olive- and orange-trees that replace the sacred grove of old. In Zaghouan there was once the monopoly of dyeing the scarlet tarboosh, or *chechia*, as it is called here, a secret that was jealously kept and handed down from father to son. Like most other towns, Zaghouan was destroyed and restored again ; in this case the restorers were some Andalusian Moors, whose descendants probably still exist among the mixed population of to-day.

On we go, passing villages occasionally, running through fine open country. Once we came on a Bedawin tribe trekking along the road, and stopped to see the always interesting sight, and to engage in a more or less wordless conversation with some of the advance guard. We found, much to my surprise I confess, that they were going to work in the fields on the other side of Tunis. What a change is here ! The proud Bedawin of the Syrian desert, who scorns to work and thinks it more befitting his dignity to steal, helped on the harvest in quite another manner ! But, apart from this modern degeneracy, they of the Sahara are very much like their Syrian brothers and sisters. Smiling and friendly, curious and ready to be amused at the strange people they meet by the way, these children of nature have pleasant manners and a courteous bearing.

And so they go their way. Two camels laden with palanquins, inside the closely drawn curtains of which

were the principal women of the tribe, led the procession ; a party of men walked after, wearing the usual white robes with immense straw hats over the classic white head-covering with its ring of camel's hair. Women in dusky blue, carrying tiny babies, and children of all ages straggling along with an escort of yellow dogs that completed the party.

Curious survival of a happy, primitive state when taxation and the general expense and worry of existence were unknown ; strange persistence of a race whose ancestors stood up against the Roman armies and the Byzantine massed attacks and existed through the centuries to oppose the French occupation, and to cheat the tax-collector ! Looking at them one seems to see pictures of the past in which the ever-changing clash of the rival powers that fought for supremacy in Moghrib is contrasted with the changeless tide of the Berber existence. When they, too, aspired to form empires, they failed and dropped back into the life that suits the tribal temperament. Up in the mountains of Kabylia they live in conical villages or in huts that resemble overturned boats ; they have different customs, perhaps, but they are true to type. They have, fundamentally, the old characteristics, the old occult tendencies and the tribal habits of life that were typical of the people who watched the first Phœnician traders set up their stalls by the seashore.

We mount the car and go on, past Enfida, with its Roman ruins, to Enfidaville, a European village near which recent excavations have brought relics of the early Christians to light, some of which have been



*Benson. P. Watson*

GATEWAY, ZAGHOUAN.



placed in the church. As we approach Susa, the country is beautifully wooded, olive-trees abounding as they do all along the Sahel, the fertile land running along the seashore north and south of Susa. And then we come in sight of the crenellated walls of the city that was once Hadrumentum and was, next to Utica, the oldest city in Tunisia.

Of Phœnician Hadrumentum, Roman Hadrumentum, even of the later Byzantine fortifications, there is little trace unless you go to look for fragments scattered about in unexpected places in the town. The most interesting relics of a past age are the walls and the huge Kasr-ar-Ribat built by an Aghlabite prince in the ninth century. The curious Arabic café, the Kahwah-al-Koubba, the café of the Dome, a Byzantine basilica once, with a fluted dome, is worth a visit.

The story of Hadrumentum differs very little, in the main, from that of other cities, but it was more vehemently contested than some on account of the strategic position and the harbours that were in great demand on that coast. Part of the mole of the old Phœnician port is still to be seen under the waters of the modern harbour, a port to which Hannibal came when summoned to defend Karthage at the end of the second Punic War and from which he set sail for Karthage after his defeat at Zama. Hadrumentum was the base of operations used by Hannibal in his last campaign ; it was spared by the Romans, took part with Pompey in the civil wars, and was taken by Cæsar after Thapsus. Trajan made it a colony and gave it a name that suggests the fertility of the surrounding

Sahel: Colonia Ulpia Trajana Augusta frugifera Hadrumentina.

In the latter part of the third century, Hadrumetum became the capital of the new province of Byzacena. It flourished in the Byzantine period and acquired a new name, Justinianopolis.

The Aghlabite dynasty that rose to power in the ninth century realised the importance of Hadrumetum and began to rebuild and repair the fortifications thrown down during the Muslim invasions. The strong walls with their crenellated battlements and their great gates were built by Ziadet-Allah-ben-Aghlat in A.D. 827. This prince was a great builder, to whom we owe not only the walls and the Kasr-ar-Ribat at Susa, but the great mosque at Qaïrowan, which he rebuilt.

Susa looks most picturesque from the sea. It mounts up a slope crowned by the Qasba, the tower of which has been converted into a light-house. The walls with their square towers are still quite intact, and within their thickness are shops and storehouses much in request by the townspeople.

To those in search of traces of the vanished city we can only say that they are to be found in many places, but it takes more time than many travellers have at their disposal to find them. MM. R. Cagnat and H. Saladin, in their *Voyage en Tunisie*, point out some of them.

The Qasba, they say, is built on the site of a Phœnician temple; the great mosque, which was built by another Aghlabite prince, Muhammed ben Ibrahim, has a gate that was taken from a Byzantine church.



The Kasr-ar-Ribat was built for a retreat—the name being taken from Ribata, which signified, to bind—and has since been used as a barracks and a school. It is a vast building with a colonnaded courtyard and two steep flights of steps leading to an upper storey, where there is a quantity of cells. There is a curious door ornamented by bronze plaques in this building, and in the vestibule many antique columns are to be found with Byzantine capitals, while sculptured consoles are part of the decoration of the arcading round the walls. Two fragments of Roman sculpture are on the lintels of a door, on the other side of which a fragment of a sarcophagus is used in the decoration. The Zaouia of the Hanefis, the oldest Arabic mosque in Susa, has some intricate decoration and a Roman mosaic on which the word Hadrumetum is included.

Mosaics in great quantity were found in the neighbourhood of Susa, as indeed they have been all over the occupied zone of Northern Africa. Some of these are in the Bardo Museum and others are exhibited in the town museum. An immense pavement on which the triumph of Neptune is portrayed is remarkable, and another small one, representing the poet Virgil, is probably unique. Virgil is seated, with a very severe expression of countenance, and on either side his chair a forbidding female stands, representing the Muses of Tragedy and Comedy.

Modern Susa is a prosperous town, a great centre for the oil industry which gives employment to so many of those living in the Sahel. Inside the city there is not very much to detain us. The native town, with

its Suqs, is enclosed within the walls ; always interesting, these local markets differ from each other more than might be imagined at first. The crowd is always the same and yet always different, and many an entertaining hour can be passed in the crowded passages where they assemble.

There is an amusing story told of the manner in which Hadrumentum changed its name to Susa. That Kart Hadash should become Karthage, Tunes Tunis, or Thamugadi Timgad, is comprehensible, but it does not appear how Hadrumentum should have dwindled into Susa. The explanation is simple.

After the Arab conquest in the seventh century, the name of Hadrumentum, which was probably found uncouth by the new masters of the old, sea-girt city, was dropped and the poetic title of Djohera, precious stone, given instead. A governor of Djohera had the strange idea of placing a great pearl hung on a string over the sea-gate, the Bab-al-Bahr, and one night it was cut down and taken away. The first to discover the theft happened to remark that a worm—duda—had bitten the thread away ; the people who collected, as crowds will collect, to see what the excitement was about, repeated the story, and the town was no longer the jewel, it was the worm. The nickname stuck, and the city is Susa, a corruption of Duda, the soft Arabic “d” turned into “s.” The French call it Sousse to this day.

The eastern coast of Tunisia has, it will be remembered, two large bays, the lesser and the greater Syrte, between which there is a projecting piece of land. Susa is situated on the southern extremity of



*Burton P. P. P.*

OUTSIDE THE WALLS, SUSA.



the little Syrte, just before the promontory, on which Monastir is placed, juts out to sea. Farther south than the great curve of the greater Syrte was once a country known as Cyrenaïca, the boundary of which, we have read in the annals of Karthage, was fixed at the Ara Phillanorum. With this Greek colony Karthage was always on the verge of war. It was founded, so Herodotus tells us, by one Battus and a colony of Dorians in the year 631 B.C. Battus, it appears, had a lisp and an impediment in his speech which caused him much annoyance, so he went to Delphi to consult the Oracle. What was his surprise when the Oracle spoke in these words: "Battus, you have come about your voice. King Phœbus Apollo sends you to found a colony in Libya, abounding in sheep."

In vain Battus protested; no other answer could he get, so he started off, half-heartedly it appears, taking two fifty-oared galleys and a party of friends. After some adventure and a forced landing on an island that did not offer any attraction, Battus returned to the Oracle. The answer he received was crushingly sarcastic: "If you, who have not been there, know Libya abounding in sheep, better than I, who have been there, I very much admire your wisdom."

Battus set out again and this time he did find Libya abounding in sheep and he founded the city of Cyrene; he was not a great man and never made much mark, but the city prospered. After the death of Alexander the Great, the Cyrenaïca became part of Egypt, and in the second century B.C. it was made a separate kingdom under a branch of the Ptolemaic family.

The last king of that race bequeathed it to Rome.

One of the great lights of Cyrene was Aristippus, who founded the Cyrenian School of Philosophy, a forerunner of the Epicurean school.

On this side of Cyrene the whole coast belonged to Karthage, in her great days, and it must often have presented a busy scene. It was known as the Emporia, from the number of Phœnician trading stations that were dotted along the coast ; at the ports of any of these places no ship, other than a Karthaginian, was allowed to land. Some of these stations still exist, such as Mahdia, where the fishers of sponges found the Greek statues at the bottom of the sea, which was a Phœnician station and later an important Roman centre ; or Monastir, so named from a great monastery which was the Ruspina of Phœnicians and Romans. The first Fatimite Khalif refounded Mahdia in the tenth century and gave it its present name, derived from his own—Obeid Allah Al Mahdi. The Almohad Abd-al-Moumen took it from the Normans of Sicily at a later date and the Crusaders besieged it in the fourteenth century, while Dragut the Corsair made it the capital until the Spaniards took it from him and dismantled it in the sixteenth century. The story of any one of these little seaport towns would fill a volume, but we can only glance at the title page, as it were, and pass on.

But to return to the palmy days of Punic supremacy. When the Phœnician galleys approached the coast, there was great excitement on the shore and people collected at any station that was expecting a

consignment. So great was the demand for the goods collected by the clever Phœnician merchants that they were often forced to unpack them on the shore and to sell or exchange them before they ever got to their warehouses. What was there to see? According to old writers, a great variety of articles, amongst which we may mention sacks of powdered gold, ostriches' eggs and feathers, lion- and tiger-skins, ebony and ivory, blue and yellow chalcedonies, elephants' tusks, stuffs dyed twice in Tyrian purple, rhinoceros horns, bracelets, collars, pearls, coloured glass vases, jewels, chased silver, embroidery worked by the clever fingers of Tyrian slaves. To these objects of luxury might be added a group of slaves, or war elephants that were to be shipped from Africa to other shores.

One of Massinissa's most unbearable actions was the seizure of this rich region; Karthage protested to Rome during three years without avail. When Rome got possession of the coast, the traffic was different, but the scene, at certain seasons, was equally busy.

Karthage paid Rome in kind and the ships bearing the corn and oil to Italy were eagerly looked for by those who relied on them to supply bread that could not be made from the crops grown within the country. Besides corn, which was said to be far better and more productive than grain from elsewhere, the ships that set sail for Italy carried lions and tigers to figure in the gladiatorial shows, so that the two national necessities exemplified in the cry of "Bread and Circuses" were supplied from Northern Africa, and the ships that conveyed them sailed from Hadrumetum and other ports on this coast.

The ships must often have had a rough passage, and a difficult landing, according to all accounts, for the tremendous seas of the lesser Syrte were famous. The desert and the sea were supposed to meet on those shores, where they indulged in a perpetual struggle for supremacy. The older Arabs tried to propitiate the genius of the dangerous promontory at the northern point of the lesser Syrte by calling it Ras Addar—Cape Good, but their successors, less superstitious or less polite, called it Ras Ghaddar—the treacherous Cape.

Susa was many times besieged. In 1537 the Spaniards besieged it without success; Andrea Doria took it later on, but the town revolted after he went back to Spain and declared for the pirate Dragut.

In the sober pages of Ibn Khaldoun, we find that Susa was often invested. The history of the rise and fall of the various Berber dynasties, dragging the fortified cities after them in their fall, or exalting them on their rise to fame, is too complicated to enter into here. But there is one story that may be told, as it gives a grim picture of life in "the good old times."

About Yezid Makhled, who passed his youth in Tozeur, that oasis city in the desert, became a reformer and gave himself the title of the Sheikh of True Believers. He dressed very simply, as became a Mahdi, rode a grey donkey, and was called by some "the man of the donkey." He attached himself to the cause of An-Nacer, an Omeyid prince then reigning in Spain, but was really intent on his own interests.



After a victory that he gained over a Fatimite general, Abou Yezid took Susa by assault ; only a few of the inhabitants escaped either death or a frightful mutilation. A terrible massacre took place that "filled Ifriquiya with corpses." Towns and villages were deserted ; the unhappy people who escaped the sword died of hunger. This is the plain unvarnished tale told by the most sober and reliable of the Arab historians.

After his successes, Abou Yezid began to despise public opinion ; he exchanged his woollen jersey for a silken robe and his grey ass for a high-spirited horse, and he continued his campaign with renewed vigour. Besieging Susa and Al Mahdia at the same time, he seems to be everywhere victorious. The Fatimite prince, Al Caim, died in Mahdia, and his son, Al Mansour, the conqueror, could not go to be proclaimed in Susa because the enemy was bombarding it with catapults. He did not give out his father's death, did not have his own name mentioned in the Friday prayers, because he thought that the news of the prince's death would encourage the enemy. When the siege of Mahdia was at last raised by Abou Yezid, Al Mansour entered Susa, where he magnanimously pardoned his enemies and even sent Abou Yezid's wife and children to him. Unsoftened by this behaviour, Abou Yezid contrived to fight his rival and, after being beaten, fled from one fortress in the mountains to another, until at last he fell down a precipice and was brought a prisoner to Al Mansour. The magnanimous one did not even then kill or torture the evasive Abou Yezid ; he reproached him bitterly

and kept him in a cage till he died. After he died he had the body skinned and stuffed with straw to be carried through the streets of Qairawan. And some say that he afterwards gave it as a plaything to two monkeys.

## CHAPTER X

### QAIROWAN

WHEN first the sacred Muslim city of Qairowan rises out of the desert, and appears four-square, walled, with minarets and domes and towers, like a thing in a dream, we can hardly think of it as a vanished city. It strikes us as complete, finished, ageless, impossible to batter down, like a house of cards, in order to build up again. Yet such has been the fate of the Muslim city, as it had been of the Roman and Byzantine foundations that we have seen so far. The curious point about it is that, whereas the Roman and Byzantine fortresses were demolished by their enemies, the Muslim city, with its holy places and its great mosques, was destroyed by Muhammedans.

As we approach nearer the salient features of the third most holy city in Islam become clear. There is the great minaret of the principal mosque, there are the five domes of the Mosque of the Swords, the simple minaret of the Mosque of the Three Gates—before we have time to distinguish more we are close under the walls.

Qairowan is one of the most fascinating cities in Northern Africa. It is unique in being entirely a native city, for the small European quarter, and even the two hotels, hardly offer a discordant note. It is not like other places that we have seen, where the Medina is enclosed within walls and kept apart and

is enveloped by the western world in which we find ourselves the moment after passing through the gates. In Qaïrowan we are definitely in the East, and with every turn we come on pictures that delight the artist.

In the crowded Place de Tunis we see camels laden with merchandise and field-produce, droves of sheep and goats, groups of white-robed men talking vehemently, while, under the shadow of the walls, a man is sleeping as peacefully as the flies will let him, and a couple of youths are playing one of those games that keep the male Arab quiet and happy for hours on end. In the Suq the women flit along like ghosts and the children squabble and the men hang about their shops with the calm indifference of the true Oriental to possible custom. The people go their way, and seem to have accepted the occasional inrush of the unbeliever with philosophical indifference, very different from their attitude a hundred years ago. Even as late as 1867 Colonel Playfair describes the scowls and averted looks of the people, and says that he could not have walked in the streets without an escort. In those days a Christian needed a special permit to enter the town, and a Jew could not even obtain that favour. Since the French occupation in 1881—when the troops were quartered in the Great Mosque—even that venerated spot is open to visitors.

The ordinary houses in Qaïrowan are of the usual eastern type: tall, white-washed, with small windows jealously barred, and often with balconies. The great doors are studded with huge nails, and



The Great Mosque, Qairowan.



sometimes have wrought-iron door-knockers. The walls, which date from the ninth century, are crenellated, and give an air of strength and antiquity to the town they enclose. Except the bits and fragments that are built into some of the older buildings, there is nothing left of the original Qaïrowan founded by Oqbar-ben-Nafi. In those days, according to the Arab historian Aboufeda, Northern Africa was divided into three parts : Moghrib-al-Aksa, from the Atlantic to Oran ; Moghrib-el-Aousat (Central Moghrib), from Oran to Bougie ; and Ifriquiya, from Bougie to Barca, on the frontier of Egypt. Although Oqbar-ben-Nafi overran all three divisions, he was principally concerned with Ifriquiya, of which province he became the governor. One of his first acts was to found a new city that should be both a camp and a stronghold of the faith. That was in the year A.D. 671, the year 50 of the Hegira.

Oqbar's objection to Susa was that it lay too near the sea, and was consequently open to the attack of any enemy ; he therefore came up country, wandering through what was then an impenetrable forest. At last he found the site that he wanted. There was no city there, but, somewhere in the neighbourhood, there was a Byzantine fort which he may have utilised. The way in which he set about to found his city is told at some length by Ibn Khaldoun.

In the forest were many wild beasts ; the serpents and snakes were particularly venomous. When this was pointed out to the founder of Qaïrowan, he addressed the creatures in these words :

“ O you, serpents and wild beasts, know that we

are the companions of the Prophet of Allah ! Retire from this place where we have decided to establish ourselves. If we meet you later on, you will be killed."

The wild beasts, taking the hint, slunk away, and the serpents slithered through the long grass, no doubt hissing as they went, to seek another home. And for forty years not one of them dared show a scale within miles of the sacred city.

A clearing was made in the forest, and a space—not very large, apparently—was enclosed within a brick wall. A few houses were built and a mosque planned, the orientation of which caused some trouble. So much discussion arose over the exact position of the mihrab, which had to be in the direct line to Mekka, that Oqbar asked for direction, which was given him in a dream. He was told to go into the place where the mosque was to be built before daybreak, and that he would then be told what to do by a voice that no one else would hear. So accordingly he took some of his followers and prostrated himself in prayer before dawn one morning. As the dawn broke, he heard a voice saying : "*Allah Akbar !*" Trembling, he asked his friends if they heard the voice, but they had heard nothing. Perhaps it would be more convincing to a sceptical generation if they had heard something, but that is by the way.

Oqbar-ben-Nafi followed the voice, which continued to praise God as it moved along ; when it stopped, he planted his standard in the ground, as he had been directed, and said :

" Behold the place ! "



The small and unpretentious town of the Arab conqueror was intended from the first to be a sanctuary. He prayed over it, saying :

“O my God! fill this town with wisdom and with the knowledge of Thy law. Let it be lived in by men pious and devoted to Thy service, and protect us against the powerful people of the earth.”

Curiously enough the people who were to throw down the walls and desecrate the mosque were Muslims.

Qaïrowan grew and prospered in spite of all attempts to found a rival city a few miles off during Oqbar's absence. He returned to be governor of Ifriquiya for the second time in the year 681-2, and was killed in battle soon after and buried near Biskra.

Hasan-ben-Numan razed Qaïrowan to the ground in 703, only sparing the mihrab of Oqbar ; but the town was rebuilt, and in 772 the mosque was said to be too small for the congregation. It was again pulled down and rebuilt. In 821 it was rebuilt again by the Aghlabite, Ziadet Allah II.

The Aghlabite princes made Qaïrowan their capital, and during the enlightened reigns of these civilised rulers the city rose to great prosperity, and even luxury. We hear of baths ; besides the public baths, there were three thousand baths in private houses ; we have read that the palace of the first king of this race was celebrated for its magnificence. Learning was not neglected. There was a *zaouia*, comprising schools with a hostel for pilgrims and a monastery,

and there was a university that was for the Eastern world what the University of Paris was for the Western. A celebrated School of Medicine was founded here also, under Ziadat Allah II. Industry flourished in this metropolis in what became a desert after the country was deforested, and then — the story is always the same—came a period of misery and destruction.

In this case it was clearly the fault of the Governor of Qaïrowan, who revolted from the suzerainty of the Fatimite dynasty, bringing about the irreparable catastrophe of the second Arab invasion—that of the nomad tribes sent by the Fatimites to lay waste the cities that had revolted against them. During the Hilalian invasion, as it is called, Qaïrowan, Tunis, Bone, and Constantine were sacked and ruined. Léon l'Africain speaks of Qaïrowan in his time as the "once noble city"; Al-Idriri, writing in the twelfth century, says that it is uninhabited. It is now, once again, a populous and prosperous town, with carpet-weaving and leather-working industries, and it has always maintained its reputation of sanctity in the Muslim world.

The Great Mosque is, I think, the most interesting of the sights to be seen in Qaïrowan. It is the fifth building erected on the site that Oqbar chose, guided by the mysterious voice, and his mihrab is still there, although it is concealed in a hiding-place in the wall behind that erected by the Aghlabite prince.

Beside the historic interest and beyond the pleasure to be derived from studying the masses of antique columns to be found both inside the prayer-room and

outside in the double colonnade that surrounds the court, there is a fascination about the place that is difficult to define : it is so vast, so silent, so restful.

On entering by a side door, you walk into the middle of a great open space paved with white marble ; it is not a true square, being slightly trapezoid, and it has a double colonnade of antique columns down two sides. To the south you see the mass of the prayer-room ; to the north the minaret towers into the deep blue sky. The silence of the place, the vast extent of the marble-paved courtyard and the huge minaret are the first impressions that most people receive on entering into the precincts of the Great Mosque of Qaïrowan.

The minaret is not an ordinary one ; there is nothing graceful or fantastic about it ; it is a huge, square tower with three storeys, each one having a crenellated gallery, and each one being rather smaller than the one below, the topmost crowned by a dome. It is the minaret that Ziadet the Aghlabite built in the ninth century, and it retains the character of the rude and turbulent times that saw its birth.

The great prayer-room has seventeen aisles, each aisle having eight columns, the result being curious, to my mind, rather than beautiful. The columns are very interesting in themselves—antique marble with Roman and Byzantine capitals. They come from Susa and other places on the coast, and some were even brought from Karthage.

The centre aisle is, according to the usual practice, higher than the others, and at the southern end is the mihrab, beautifully decorated. It was erected by

Ziadet Allah I, and through the perforated sculptured marble plaques the mihrab of Oqbar can be still seen, while protected from the pilfering fingers of the faithful. The columns are from a Christian church, probably taken from the Basilica of Karthage. The fine eleventh-century mimbar is in the invariable form adapted for the pulpit, that of a flight of steps leading straight up to the chair. The panels are each one different, executed by artists in Baghdad. Near by is the group of columns, between two of which it is necessary to pass if you wish to attain Paradise.

The ceiling is ancient, and from it depend great hanging lustres with myriads of lights. The dome is supported by columns of porphyry, marble and granite. The whole effect is rich and decorative.

The attendants lift up the carpets that our feet must not soil, allowing us to walk on the marble pavement. We look and admire, though, personally, in spite of its beauty and impressiveness, the prayer-room of a mosque always leaves me cold. However beautiful the very emptiness and solitude that impressed me so strongly outside in the courtyard may be, they strike a chill in what ought to be the sanctuary.

Intricate Oriental decoration, carved doorways, tiles with that lustre that the Moors brought to perfection in Spain, geometrical plaster-work—in short, the decorative features that are so typical of Muslim architecture—are contrasted here with the classic grace of the sculptured capitals of the forest of columns. The doorway of Lalla Rihana and the great red porphyry



*Burton & Watson.*

TOMB OF SIDI OQBAR, BISKRA.

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columns in the central aisle come from different schools of architecture, but blend happily.

The art that the Moors evolved out of the legacy left by the Romans and Byzantines, and the influence of the great countries round about, is, of course, amazing in its decorative quality. That people who had lived in tents for so many centuries should have evolved a new school of architecture is curious, but evolve it they did, in spite of those writers who try to make out that Copts, or Greeks, or Persians were employed by them, and that they had practically little to do with the new development. While acknowledging all that Muslim art took from other nations, as Professor Lane Powell and M. Saladin do, we must give the Muslim architects the credit that they deserve.

They were never great builders from the constructive point of view ; they used bad materials, and were, as builders, rather bad workmen. But their decoration was unique, and the wide horseshoe arches, the minarets and the domes gave character to the exterior of their buildings which they would otherwise have lacked.

The Romans did not trouble to build very strong fortifications because of the " Roman peace " they inaugurated, as well as the defenceless condition to which they had reduced the natives. The Byzantines built massive fortifications, piled up out of the stones from old temples. The Arabs copied their fortifications, and the Byzantine type of architecture persisted for many a century even after a new element showed itself. In Ifriquiya (modern Tunisia) the influence of Mesopotamia and Sarsanid Persia was brought by the

agency of the Abbasid Khalifs of Egypt ; in Morocco the development was more distinctly that of the Andalusian Moors ; but in all Arab architecture there are foreign elements, and the Great Mosque at Cordoba can be studied side by side with the mosque at Qaïrowan.

Ziadet built his great tower out of old material, and there is even a bit of a Roman inscription let into its wall by the side of the door. It has far more the character of a Byzantine fortress than of the slender minarets so often seen in Oriental cities. For his columns, as we have seen, he used the older cities as quarries, behaving in this respect much as his Greek predecessors would have done when building up their basilicas from Roman temples.

The other mosques usually visited are the so-called Mosque of the Barber, the Mosque of the Swords, and the Mosque of the Three Gates. The former of these lies outside the town. It was founded by a follower of the Prophet who always carried about with him three hairs from the Prophet's beard, which he obtained when Muhammed was shaved during his last pilgrimage. The hairs were buried with him, and gave rise to the legend about the barber. The many courts through which you pass on the way to the shrine have each a special character ; in one there are the black and white alternate slabs in the arcading that came from Turkey ; in another the exquisite Moghribin work so typical of Muslim art. The shrine itself is in a little chapel off a courtyard. It is covered with carpets and embroideries, and queer little bundles, containing earth brought from Mecca by pilgrims, hang on the



grating in front. The shrine is entered through a charming rococo Italian marble doorway, which was given by a rich citizen of Qaïrowan who had been cured of a serious illness by an Italian doctor. He rewarded the doctor so generously that the latter presented his patron with the marble doorway, which he had procured from his native country.

The Mosque of the Swords is a nineteenth-century building set up in honour of a lazy beggar who preferred being a holy and half-demented Marabout to working at his blacksmith's forge. He showed his gratitude for the favours heaped on him by forging a gigantic sword and an enormous pipe, which are kept as relics, together with some great rusty iron anchors, said to have been taken from Christian ships.

The Mosque of the Three Gates is the oldest of all : it is very simple in design, and is ornamented on the outside by a Cufic inscription.

The Suqs in Qaïrowan are much like those in other towns, but the great carpet warehouses are very interesting, as the quantity of carpets shown is great. I remember sitting in one of these " emporia," drinking coffee out of a long glass, and watching the piles of carpets and rugs displayed. There were some peculiar to Qaïrowan, I remember, that were all black and white and had a very good effect. From the comfortable upper chamber in which we were so hospitably entertained, we went down into the Suq again, to watch some of the people at work on their looms.

Qaïrowan is the resort of that fanatical sect, the Ben Aïssa, and I believe the curious in these matters can attend their meetings and see the fakirs swallow

glass, cactus, and snakes ; but I did not attempt the adventure. The story of the manner in which the founder collected his disciples is told as follows :

The saint collected his followers before his house. He stood on the stairs outside his door and he drew a poignard from his sash, observing that he had been ordered by a divine revelation to kill a man on the spot. Who was there among them all who loved him enough to offer his life as a sacrifice? A man replied, " I will ! " Ben Aïssa took him into the house and shut the door. Presently a great cry was heard and a stream of blood ran down the steps. Ben Aïssa returned and demanded another victim, and another ; after each request a man went ; the cry was heard, the blood flowed. At last, when forty men had voluntarily given their lives, and when no more answered his appeal, he threw open the door and showed the forty disciples safe and well, while forty sheep lay slain at their feet. Since that day there have always been forty disciples of the Ben Aïssa sect.

Now although this is quite a pleasant story, it is only the beginning of a life that some people might think worse than death. The true disciples of this terrible sect slash themselves with knives and torture their bodies, to arrive at the perfect indifference to the earthly comfort and happiness that blocks the way to spiritual purity. And they make a show of their sufferings in the public meetings that they still hold.

Thinking of this, among other things, as we mounted to the gallery of the first storey of the minaret of the

Great Mosque, I think it coloured the scattered impressions that reached me there. What was the life like that was going on all around us in sacred Qaïrowan? What was there behind the jealously closed windows and under the countless little domes that bob up like soap-bubbles among the flat roofs of the Medina? Were there luxurious houses in which gold and the blue of lapis lazuli and the glint of copper and the lustre of old tiles lit up the interior, in which beautiful houris sat about on rugs from Persia or carpets spun in their own looms at Qaïrowan? And were these pale fanatics in the very next street, cutting themselves with knives and burning off their hands in the effort to show their indifference to the flesh and their superiority of the spirit? Or were these idle travellers' tales, as unlike sober reality as black is from white? Who can tell?

No one can put a hand on the pulse of an Eastern city who has not lived among the people for many years, and, even then, it is only one of many who would take the trouble to understand.

Whatever the life of the modern dweller in Qaïrowan may be, however devoid of romance the interior of the shrouded houses, the old story fills a page that may often be turned over, one in which we could always find something new. Haroun-ar-Raschid, with whose night adventures we are more conversant than with his daily duties as a great ruler, gave all this country to the Aghlabites as a fief. The Court of an Eastern kinglet was held here, with its parade of warriors on prancing horses and its harem of cloistered women. The various sects that broke the unity of

Muhammedanism fought each other here, but, in the main, the extraordinary force of that organised system of morality bound peoples together who had no national tie. The Muslim empire, without boundaries, without political divisions, swept over Northern Africa carrying the Berbers in its onrush, like a great tidal wave. That is the real romance of Qaïrowan.

As we left the great white marble courtyard, a tiny figure was seen on the second gallery of the minaret, and a far-away voice broke the silence :

*" Allah Akbar ! "*

## CHAPTER XI

### AL DJEM

THE great amphitheatre of Al Djem appears majestically on the horizon as we motor along the road from Susa, a vision of past civilisation in a country that has run to waste. From far off we sight this mass of masonry, so strangely isolated, looking like some desert island in a silent sea, or a city left stranded by the passing centuries in a sort of No Man's Land. It is not until we are quite near that the little village clinging round its base is visible and, when it is seen, the contrast between the blind walls of Arab shanties and the monument of Imperial Rome is most striking.

The country through which we have been passing is for the most part uncultivated, and yet it was once one of the richest and most populous provinces of Africa, the famous Byzacena, in which villages almost touched each other, fortresses sprang up at short intervals, and great cities were common. In and out of these villages and towns, the primeval forest which once covered the whole country, filled in the intervening spaces. This region, therefore, now so desolate, was once, as we read in all the old books, capable of supporting a "dense population." Not only towns and villages flourished, but small farmers made fortunes out of the sale of the famed African corn ; oil mills were set up in places where now there

is not a sign of an olive-tree. The whole condition of the country has changed.

The deforestation of the Byzacena is always laid to the door of the Berber heroine, Al Kahina, and no doubt she did incalculable harm in her efforts to stem the torrent of the Arab invasion, but it is clear that she could not have ruined the vast extent of country lying between Tripoli and Tangier, as is often stated. Succeeding generations must have done their work, and the gradual change in the conditions of all the country bordering on the Sahara must be taken into account. Colonel Playfair, driving from Susa to Al Djem in 1867, speaks of the "extensive trail" of Roman occupation that he noticed by the way; and the explorer, Bruce, passing the same way a hundred years before that date, says that he passed through forests of which there is now no trace. It is probably true that the Berber and Arab populations of recent years have not hesitated to cut down trees for fuel without planting new ones, and have even set fire to woods to get more ground for pasturage.

Whatever the cause, the result is tragic. Gone are the *mapalia*—the peasants' houses made of unhewn stones cemented with mud, and the little farms and the oil mills; gone also are the cisterns and the aqueducts set up by Rome. Instead, we have long tracts of reddish sand and hard-baked earth with scrub and halfa grass, and a certain amount of straggling olive-groves.

We leave the car at a little restaurant, where lunch is provided, and walk up the narrow lane flanked by stone walls taken from the ruins of Thysdrus; we are



THE AMPHITHEATRE, AL DJEM.





beset by the most persistent mob of children of all ages with voices of surpassing shrillness. A young monkey astride a donkey rides up and down imploring us to take his photograph. Although there are no trippers here, it is evident that they are not unknown at Al Djem.

Having shaken off the children, with some difficulty, I pass through an open space where some sheds have been set up to form a miniature Suq. It is midday and the men are sitting about on the ground or lying in the shadow of their little shops. Unmolested, I walk round the walls of the colossus and I enter the amphitheatre by the breach in its circumference made by Muhammed Bey in 1697.

After a dull morning the wind has risen, driving away the clouds, sweeping the sky clear of everything except the filmiest streaks of lace trailing down so low that they seem almost to touch the broken attic of the great shell of masonry before me ; for it is only a shell, as I realise once I have set foot inside it—a vast oval shell, rising up at different points to the third storey and once even including the fourth. The stone of which it is composed is pale gold in colour ; it is a fine-grained marine shell-limestone from Sellekta, on the coast, near Mahdia. It is of the type that is easily worked but that does not lend itself to clear cutting and carving. Perhaps, for this reason, the mason's work is not so good here as it is in other Roman buildings in Africa. The lewis holes, also, made for the purpose of hauling the stones into place, are left on the exterior instead of being discreetly hidden.

The rows of seats which make the interior of the Colosseum so interesting, are wanting here, but some of the flights of steps by which they were approached are intact, and the vast corridors that run round the oval of the great shell can be easily gained. The general impression is very fine, especially on a day when light and shade play about in the dark corridors pierced by arcaded openings, and on long ledges of ochre stone on which green grass and gold brown moss have attached themselves.

An opening in the ground, like a giant's coffin, shows that the underground region has been excavated, but no one offers to show off the monument, so the pilgrim, superficial as to sightseeing and impenitent as to faults of omission, sat in the sunshine and tried to conjure up old stories of the past connected with the history of Al Djem—the Thysdrus of the Roman occupation.

What do we know about Thysdrus? Very little. A mere hamlet, according to Cæsar, it grew in importance until it became a colony in the third century A.D. It was then one of the richest and most populous cities in all Byzacena, and was said to have contained about a hundred thousand souls. An inscription of this period sets forth a magistrate's boast that he had brought water in such abundance to Thysdrus that not only was the city supplied, but it was distributed to private houses. Although Thysdrus has vanished completely, there are traces of an earlier amphitheatre and other buildings at some little distance south of the village; the many references found in Arabic works all point to the importance of the place. How

the idea originated that Thysdrus was merely a city of pleasure, a sort of Wembley on a grand scale, for the benefit of the cities round about, is difficult to comprehend ; but such a legend exists. It is not known when the amphitheatre was built or even if it was ever completed, neither is the name of the founder known, though it has been attributed to one of the Gordians. After the burning of Rome in A.D. 67, that conflagration which Nero is said, perhaps unjustly, to have lit for his amusement, a splendid opportunity was offered to architects, and many great buildings were erected, amongst them the famous Flavian amphitheatre, the Colosseum of Rome. Vespasian, the restorer of temples, began it in 75, Titus continued the work during his short reign, and Domitian completed it in 82.

It was a wonderful experiment, a colossus that Roman love of wild-beast shows and pageantry as opposed to the drama had developed out of the Greek theatre. Admirable in construction, conception, proportion, it was like all Roman work, immensely practical. Fifty thousand spectators could be seated, each having a good view of the arena. The great house could be filled and emptied—vomited out, as the elegant Latin expression goes—from the many exits in a few minutes. Every arrangement was made for the comfort and convenience of the audience. There were covered galleries round each storey in which people could shelter themselves in case of rain. There was the huge *velum* that was drawn across to give shade to the sunny side of the house, and the perfumed showers of water that cooled the air when it was hot.

The arena could be flooded for nautical shows and the water drained off again when no longer wanted. Underground there was a network of machinery as well as cells for wild beasts and rooms for gladiators, and, no doubt, there were pits for the dead bodies of those who entered by the gate of life and went out through the gate of death.

All these arrangements were copied in the provincial amphitheatre at Thysdrus, and it has been pointed out that, in the exterior, the African architect surpassed the Roman model in the richness of the decoration. The Roman Colosseum has a Doric, half-engaged order in the lower storey, an Ionic order on the second, and a Corinthian on the third. The fourth, which is pierced by windows, has only pilasters. In some provincial amphitheatres only the less ornamental Doric order is employed, but at Thysdrus we have Corinthian order in the first and third storeys with a composite order in the middle. The fourth storey had most probably another Corinthian order, so that the richness of effect was greater here than even in Rome itself. There were two grand entrances, one of which has vanished in the breach made by Muhammed Bey in the endeavour to stop warring tribes from using the old amphitheatre as a fortress.

The name of the Emperor Gordian I is associated with Thysdrus, whether he or his family gave the amphitheatre to the city or not. Gordianus was a man of a noble Roman family who was Pro-Consul of Africa ; when he was seventy-nine years old he was living quietly in a country house in the neighbourhood,

when he was told that he had been proclaimed Cæsar Imperator, with the added title of Africanus, in Thysdrus. Whether the proclamation was made in this amphitheatre or whether it was in the older one or in some other building is not clear, but we do know that Gordian came into the city for a few days before going on to Karthage, which he entered in triumph with the son he had associated with himself in the purple. Gordian was said to have been unwilling to take on this great responsibility, and he committed suicide a few weeks after he accepted it—after the death of his eldest son in a fight with the Third Augustan Legion, which supported his rival. It is therefore unlikely that, in the short interval, he should have arranged to build the amphitheatre in honour of his elevation to the throne of the Cæsars.

His grandson was eventually elected Emperor by the Roman Senate. He was a mere boy, who was murdered before he was twenty by Philip the Arab. His taste for art and his desire to promote the interests of his native city have made it probable that he presented the amphitheatre to the city that had proclaimed his grandfather and uncle, but nothing definite is known. The coin on which an amphitheatre is engraved on the reverse, with the head of Gordian III on the face and an inscription about his munificence, refers to his restoration of the Roman Colosseum.

Rome was certainly in full decadence when emperors of alien birth were elected in outskirts of the Empire. Septimius Severus, of African birth, had done well

enough, but his marriage to the corrupt Julia Domnia, daughter of the High Priest of the Sun at Emesa, brought Syrian blood into the family, and her nephew Alexander, who succeeded the terrible Caracalla, was a pure Syrian. Alexander was a good fellow, but not strong enough for the post; he and his avaricious mother, another member of the family of the High Priest, and another *femme maîtresse*, disgusted the army by docking the soldiers' pay. The couple were assassinated by the army on the Rhine, who proclaimed Maximinus the Thracian. As a counter-stroke to that proclamation, the Africans put up Gordian, whose claim was ratified by the Roman Senate. Unluckily, Capellian, the Governor of Mauritania, was on the side of the Thracian, and it was he who fought the Gordians outside Karthage at the head of the Legion. That was in the year A.D. 235.

Another name that is associated with the amphitheatre is that of the Berber heroine Al Kahina, Princess or Queen of the tribe Djeraoua in the Aures Mountains. The real name of this remarkable woman was Dilieya, but she was known as the Kahina, a word signifying a priestess, a diviner, a doctor or a sorceress, as you choose to interpret it. She was really a very clever woman, brave and strong-minded, as well as having a gift as a clairvoyante; this combination of qualities stood her in good stead until she made a mistake, after which they all seemed to desert her, except the courage that enabled her to make a worthy end to a fighting career.

The Kahina lived in the wild Aures Mountains,

her headquarters being at the Kasr Baghai, where she ruled her tribe and her three sons despotically. Her tribe had adopted Judaism and she was therefore opposed to the invading Arabs from the side of religion as well as from that of patriotism ; after the death of Koceila, she took up the position of defender of the Berbers, and she gradually collected not only other Berber tribes under her standard, but also stranded Greeks who were out against the Arabs and had now no centre to which they could go. A woman of good old Berber stock with a masculine intellect and feminine charm, the Kahina exercised a powerful influence over the whole country, of which she became the acknowledged Queen.

In the year A.D. 696, the Ummayyad Khalif sent Hasan-ben-Numan to carry war into Egypt and Africa. He gave him an army of forty thousand men, and these instructions :

“ I leave your hands free ; dip into the treasures of Egypt and distribute gratifications to your companions and to those who have joined you. Then make a holy war in Ifriquiya and may the blessing of God be on you.”

Hasan-ben-Numan plundered as freely as he might ; he took Qaïrowan and Karthage, and was no doubt hoping for a succession of victories, when he was brought up to face the music by the Kahina, who defeated him on the banks of the Oued Nini near Baghaia. The Arabs fled in disorder and Hasan retreated on Gabes.

A number of prisoners were taken in this battle, all of whom were released except one, and that was

where the Kahina made her fatal mistake. Did no secret voice warn her that she was undoing her great work when she adopted the beautiful young man from the ranks of the enemy and placed him among her own sons? Hitherto she had always been guided by her voices, and she had always foreseen exactly how any event would turn out; and yet here she took a strange youth, because his appearance pleased her, laid his head on her breast as a symbol of the divine function of maternity, and received him into her family. The adopted son lost no opportunity of keeping his people informed of the movements of his hosts, acting as a spy, and turned against his benefactress in the hour of defeat.

During the course of her campaigns against the Arabs, the Kahina occupied the amphitheatre of Thysdrus, which was then complete and which made a splendid fortress, with plenty of room for her tribes of warriors to encamp. Al Bekri and other Arab historians mention that she was besieged here, saying that she cut an underground passage out of the living rock between the amphitheatre and a place on the coast near Mahdi called Selek'ta, from whence she had fresh provisions sent by her sister as long as the siege lasted. That this is no mere legend is proved by another story, told at a subsequent date, of a siege that was raised because the besieged used to throw down fresh fish, procured by means of the Kahina's tunnel, on the heads of the besiegers. Finding that the fortress-amphitheatre was impregnable, and that the garrison could not be reduced by famine, the



besieging force retired, looking, one might imagine, rather foolish.

When the Khalif heard of the defeat of his troops under Hasan, he sent reinforcements and ordered him to attack again. This time the Kahina knew not only that he would be victorious but that her own time had come. Her death was announced to her by rather a peculiar sign.

"I know," she said, "that my end is near. When I look to the east, I have a buzzing in my ears that tells me so."

It was then that the Queen committed the act of vandalism that ruined the country. Farms and villages, trees and harvests were ruthlessly burned and cut down in order that the enemy should find no food and no loot. That it would take a long time before the country recovered, if ever it did recover, does not seem to have troubled the warrior Queen. Having prepared for the enemy, she announced that he would be victorious, and she instructed her sons as to their behaviour. They were to submit to the Arab chief and offer their services. When she was recommended to fly, she replied :

"She who has commanded Christians, Arabs, and Berbers, ought to know how to die like a Queen."

She led her troops into action, lost the battle, as she had foretold, and was killed, leaving her sons to make their peace with the Arabs, who accepted their submission and gave them the command of the Berber troops included in the Arab forces. Whether or no Al Kahina died at Bir-al-Kahina or elsewhere, with her died Berber independence.

Among some of the writings scratched on the ruins of the amphitheatre at Al Djem is one in the Berber tongue, which may very likely have been written by one of Al Kahina's followers during their occupation of the fortress.

## CHAPTER XII

### ARABIC MUSIC

IF we listen to a party of Arabic musicians in any café or street in a native quarter, even if we hear those of higher calibre in a concert hall, we are almost sure to do so in a hostile spirit. The nasal tones of the singer, repeating what sounds like the same phrase, yet garnished each time by new twists and trills, are monotonous, and so is the strange, barbaric, syncopated rhythm of the accompanying drum. Sudden leaps from forte to piano, sudden passionate, crescendo passages vary the monotony, it is true ; the accompanying thuds on the drums may become temporarily divorced from the melody, asserting themselves, clashing, in what to Western ears is a dissonance. To some the monotony is preferable to the excitement.

Those who know the East well feel all the fascination that is latent in this music, which they often associate with the sights and sounds of the Orient. Moreover, they have taken the trouble to understand it, and that is necessary in order to appreciate the melody and the rhythm of Arabic music. Fallen from its former high estate as it has, we must remember that we, in Europe, learned our musical science from the Arab. It is easy enough to realise that it might have been learned when all Europe flocked to the Spanish universities to study the classics, but we must go back farther than that.

The Arabs have always been a music-loving nation. They derived their knowledge of its theory from the Greeks, after the Romans opened the way to culture, probably taking little or nothing from the Egyptians, but a great deal from the Persians. At the Courts of the pre-Islamic Khalifs and at those of the innumerable kinglets and princes, in days when paganism was still lingering, part of every day was given up to music. Groups of singers were attached to every Court, and wandering minstrels roved from one to another, as troubadours did in Europe. Some of these found their way to England at an early date and had a great influence on English music, as we shall see by and by. A story told by M. A. Christianovitch, in his *Esquisse Historique de la Musique Arabe*, shows the effect that the severe laws of the Prophet Muhammed had on the arts, and especially on music.

Azza-t-al Meila, a celebrated woman singer who introduced the song with cadence into Medina, was one day singing to the old poet Hassan-ben-Thabit, who was blind. The poet wept because her song reminded him of happy, bygone days. He recalled a Court where ten singers were always employed—five sang in Greek and five sang the songs of Heira. When the Khalif sat down to listen, the ground was strewn with jasmine, roses, and lilies; vases of silver held amber and musk to perfume the air; in winter woods of India were burned in the hearth; in summer cool garments were handed to the guests and snow-water sprinkled around.

“And he had always a smiling face,” the old blind poet said, “and a kind word for everyone, and an



Sunset at Djemila



open hand for charity before it was asked. Alas ! that was in the days of paganism ! Then came Islamism ; we gave up wine, and everything was forbidden by law. And now you Muhammedans, you drink the wine of the date, extracted from the fruit when it is still green ; you've hardly emptied three cups before you are squabbling, and then you fight like angry camels ! ”

The pity of it is that the beautiful old Arabic melodies were handed down from one player to another and committed to memory ; as they were not written, they fell out of use during the early days of the Muslim dynasty, and, although the later Omeiydes and Abassides encouraged music, it was too late. It was lost, and the modern music is merely a travesty of what the old has been. Not only were songs forgotten, but the classic Nouba, which resembles the symphony of Europe, was forgotten. The seven Nouba we have now were handed down by word of mouth alone ; they are only a feeble reflection of what the originals were. M. Christianovitch has these words on the subject :

“ In reproducing the expiring echo of a magnificent past, I hasten to say humbly to the friends of music, ‘ I offer you what the descendants of this great people of the East, who venerated and cherished the cause that unites us, have given me. Receive these dear survivals of antiquity, and, in accepting them, remember the tortures and the mutilations that the unfortunate relics have suffered in passing through the long series of centuries that separates them from our age.’ ”

These Nouba, of which he gives us some examples, began with an introduction, and passed into a theme which was connected with a second; a return to the first melody, more lively in tone, and sometimes with a new rhythm, led to the concluding *allegro vivace*, falling at the last note to a pedal point.

It will be seen that the ancient music was advanced in style; it had also an extraordinarily emotional quality, according to the old writers, which continued even after some of its most precious characteristics had been lost. There is a story of the composer, Al-farabi, who learned music in the great School of Music in Cordova at the end of the ninth century. The Sultan Fekhraddonea sent messengers with costly presents, inviting him to his Court, but Al-farabi paid no attention to these offers because he was afraid that he would not be allowed to return to Cordova. At last he resolved to sing to the Sultan incognito.

One evening, when the Sultan was enjoying his daily concert, the slaves brought in a wandering musician. He was in rags, and no one expected much of him, but he was allowed to show his skill. He sang and the whole Court was convulsed with laughter; when the merriment was loudest, he suddenly changed the melody, and the rhythm and the laughter changed to sobs and groans. He lashed his audience to fury, and, when they were just going to set upon the extraordinary stranger, he lulled them to sleep.

And then he stole out and went back the same way



that he had come. When the Sultan and the Court awoke, they decided that the minstrel could have been no other than Al-farabi.

The emotional effect of music is very marked on the modern Arab. Not only does it affect the listener, but the performer is sometimes seen to be in a sort of ecstatic state. One of the songs that will often make an audience weep is the song of Salah Bey, who was summoned to the Court of Algiers, where his head was treacherously cut off. The song is arranged in two parts. In the first we have his farewell to his family, who beg him not to go, anticipating danger, his arrival at Algiers and his death. In the second is a lamentation and panegyric. Between the two is a recitative in which the words "The Bey is dead!" occur with dramatic effect.

2 — But it is time to consider, very superficially, the difference that exists between Arabic music and European. We have only two scales, a major and a minor; the Arabs have fourteen scales or modes, in which the semi-tones are changed and form different modulations. All Arabic musicians play in unison, and the only accompaniment is the drum. Their two constituent parts are melody and rhythm, though neither the one nor the other is always recognised at first by a Western ear. As to their instruments, they are various, the commonest being drums, both the round and the square type seen in the Sahara, tambourines of various sorts, the *rebab*, a stringed instrument played with a bow, the *kemendjah*, another stringed instrument, which appears to have been adopted from the Persians at a later date, the *kouitra*,

which resembles a mandoline, and various sorts of flutes. Most of these instruments have handed on their names to the instruments of mediæval Europe.

On these instruments, as well as by the agency of the voice, the flourishes and grace notes that are improvised by every good musician are performed. Modern Arabic music is melancholy in tone, and the embellishment, that used only to adorn the theme, is very apt to drown the real motive of the composition. All the same, to an ear that is attuned to the abrupt changes and the curiously prolonged cadences and the different modes of the Eastern music, it has a very strong attraction.

Arabic poetry has always been said to have begun by the men conducting the caravans over the desert, who found that their songs encouraged the camels to better going. The thud of their four feet made the basis, and the long and short syllables of spoken speech completed the metre. The monotonous swaying of the camel's motion is suggested in the long poems that beguiled the long way; the song of the camel-man became known as the *hita*. Just as Khalil invented a metre founded on the beating on metal of the men working in the Suk, so the first poetry of the Arabs was founded on a simple every-day occurrence. Whether or no it is also true that the melodious Modhar fell from his camel and broke his arm, and that he intoned his grief so musically that the camels, encouraged, went off at double pace, we cannot be so sure. "Ya, yedah! ya, yedah!" ("Oh, my arm! Oh, my arm!") he lamented, after being hoisted on his



*Boulton & Watkinson.*

THE FOUNTAIN, DJEMILA.



mount again ; and so, from mere recitation, the camels were cheered on by song.

The Arabs, taking much of their science from Greece, had measured music and musical notation long before they were known in Europe. Guido da Arrezzo, who was the father of harmony, is said to have invented the system of notation, taking the first syllables of the Hymn of St. John. But before his day the Arabs had used their letters to designate notes, and the likeness to Guido's system is apparent. Mi, fa, sol, la, si, do (Ut) is Guido's list, and the Arabic is mim, fa, sad, lam, sin, dal, ra.

When Europe had nothing more complicated than plain song, the Arab musicians began to wander about and teach a new method.

The monk, Jayme Villanueva, speaks of a method of notation invented by one whom he calls "Fulan," by which he probably means that he does not know the name or that the student is anonymous, as the expression "Fulano" for anyone unnamed is common to-day in Spain.

"It is marvellous," he writes, "that the gifts of the Holy Spirit should be poured down on infidels. I say this for this reason, that a certain Fulan by name, a Moor of the Kingdom of Granada, highly praised among Spanish Citharists, by the impulse of the spirit of learning has discovered the art for the instruction of those who wish to play the Lambutum, Cythara, viola, and instruments similar to these."

He then describes the system of notation known as "tablature," which was in use in Europe up to the eighteenth century.

The penetration of the Arabian systems in England, and the effect that they had on English music, is brought out in a very interesting manner by Mr. H. G. Farmer, both in his notes in his edition of Salvador Daniel's *Arab Music* and in his own works. He says that Walcher, Prior of Malvern, who died in 1135, derived his "Arabian science from an Arabian Jew known as Petrus Anfusi, who visited England. Adelard of Bath, who returned to England in 1130, was a student at Toledo, as were Daniel Morlay and Robert of Retine.

The great innovation of the twelfth century was mensural music, known to the Arabic theorist Al-Khalil, and mentioned by him in his *Kitab-al-'Arudh* (*Book of Rhythm*). This book has not come down to us, but there are frequent references to it in the books of the earliest writers. As he died in the year 791, it proves that the Arabs were writing musical theory long before Europe had begun to think about it, much less to write on the subject. We may remember that Saint Augustine wrote a long treatise on music, of which he was afterwards rather ashamed, because the subject was rather too frivolous for his pen; and that was in the fourth century.

The Zai'ida, or Gloss—an ornament on melody—was introduced into Greece by a Jewish singer. The interesting point to us is that the trills, accents, and abbreviations popular in the days of Charlemagne are still practised by the Arabs. From this fact it is adduced by some of the foremost writers on music of the East that the Arabs, having retained these features, probably give us the same

type of music that we had in Europe in the days of the troubadours.

In the thirteenth century England, then in the forefront of the musical nations of Europe, was largely influenced by the East. We used major and minor thirds, discarded elsewhere as discords; these were used "in Anglia, in *patria quæ dicitur* Westcuntrie." As several of the noted musicians just mentioned, like Adelard of Bath, who had studied in Spain, came from the "Westcuntrie," the inference is obvious.

Not only the new science interested our musicians, but the new instruments brought over by the wandering minstrels were studied and adopted, their names passing into our language with a slight alteration, such as the Al-ud, that became the lute, and the gitar the guitar. Many words are derived from the Arabic which do not at all suggest their origin; a case in point is a "fanfare" of trumpets, which might have come from a French word, but which is derived from the Arabic "*naḥr*," a trumpet, becoming "*anafir*" in the plural.

In the fourteenth century the theorist Robert de Handlo, speaking of the difference of the new style of music brought over from the East, says: "One style is simply prolated, that is, without fractions or division, another is copulated or flowered."

The result of engrafting the Greek science—brought to light through the Arabic translations of the works of Pythagoras and others—on to the Arabic native theorists, and through them to Europe, was that, through what was called "organising," we passed on

to harmony. We cannot take from the Arabs the claim that they introduced instrumental tablature and musical notation to Europe.

The four principal modes of the Arab music are : the Iraq, which has D for base, and is serious, grave, rather majestic ; the Meymoun, which is sad, pathetic, and rather effeminate ; the Edzeil, with F for base, proud, tempestuous, terrible, used for war music ; and the Djorka, which resembles both the Iraq and the Edzeil modes. The Kabyles, who only use wind instruments, always use the Edzeil mode.

The great Alma Mater of Arabic musicians, as of so many Europeans, was the great School of Cordova, but there were others in Northern Africa. "Constantine the African," we know, studied at Karthage. The Church music occupied the attention of no less a personage than Saint Augustine, who, like Saint Gregory, wanted to simplify and purify the music of the Mass ; Augustine went to Alexandria, where he heard simple hymns that pleased him far more than the theatrical songs that had been introduced into the services of the Church. When he returned to Hippone he introduced these simpler modes into his basilica.

When we remember the history of music and the great School of Music that once flourished in these lands long before we had anything of the sort in our own, it makes the modern music more interesting—perhaps more intelligible. The rough notes that I have given are not intended for enthusiasts of Oriental music ; they are meant solely and entirely for those



who perhaps have never stopped to think whether the Arabic music, which may have caused them to stop their ears, has a past or not. As such, the subject comes in quite legitimately into a book on vanished cities, as one of the vanished arts that, alas ! no amount of excavating can bring up to the light of day again. The drastic reforms of Muhammed, and the laws against the cultivation of arts that were supposed to be useless, killed the more elaborate forms of music, which had never been written down ; poetry suffered in the same way, but men continued to recite verse, and much was retained of the old pre-Islamic poetry.

To the ears of anyone accustomed to the East, the modern music of the Arabs has a great, peculiar charm. A song accompanied by the *kouitra*, for instance, when each couplet is repeated on the instrument in the form of a ritornello, can be very attractive ; the plaintive note, nearly always introduced by the singer or musician, has its own arresting quality.

Whether performed by a few street musicians with drum and fife or by a more pretentious band with perhaps some other native percussion instruments and the queer stringed instruments never seen in the West, whether or no accompanied by a singer, the audience will be spellbound. They know what to expect ; they understand their music. They realise that the last note of a recitative is to be prolonged by the violin and to serve as a cue to the drums that beat out the rhythm. They expect the singer or the stringed instruments to make their own variations, and they are not alarmed if the song or melody

and the accompaniment are temporarily divorced. Perhaps, as we have already noted, they are listening to the music of long ago, which they alone have preserved; if we leave aside our Western prejudices, we also can enter into and enjoy their curious, plaintive art.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SBEITLA

ON the Roman road between Le Kef and Susa, almost at the gates of the Sahara, one of those triumphal arches stands, in solitary grandeur, that we find all over Northern Africa. This one informs the traveller that he is approaching the great city of Sufetula and, as is usual in such cases, it is placed at a considerable distance from the town.

The arch is imposing and has been restored, so that its four disengaged unfluted Corinthian columns are once more in place. The sun shines on the golden stone, coloured by the sun and the course of ages, and lights up the ruts in the paved way made by the wheels of Roman chariots and Byzantine waggons. It is all very peaceful and quiet now, but I suppose that, in past ages, an armed guard would have been found here and, very likely, a would-be visitor would have been obliged to show his credentials before being allowed to proceed any farther.

The capital of Sufetula was built on a plateau, from which the ground slopes down abruptly to a winding river, the Oued Sbeitla, beyond which low hills mask the horizon. A fine position for the principal buildings of a provincial town and the temples for which Sbeitla—as the name has got modernised—is famous, were well worthy of such a site. Not grand, or terrific, or in any way awe-inspiring, the scenery

about the ruins is exceedingly picturesque and rather unusual in colour.

As we walk up the path we see before us a high wall enclosing the temples, in the centre of which is a monumental gateway with three bays and Corinthian columns supporting an architrave and frieze that are still in place. Passing through this arch, which is dedicated to Antoninus Pius, but which appears to have been erected at the cost of the townspeople, we find ourselves in a vast enclosure, at the farther end of which are three temples, standing side by side, connected with each other by arches that span the dividing spaces.

The Heiron, or enclosure, had colonnades down two sides which contained shops; the whole space, which was once beautifully paved, is now overgrown by weeds and grass. As we walk up, the sight of the three temples is singularly effective and unusual. The middle temple, which is rather the highest of the three, is of the Composite order; it is dedicated to Jupiter. The other two are of the Corinthian order, and are dedicated, one to Juno and the other to Minerva. The Capitoline triad have here each a temple instead of a shrine each in one temple, as is usually the case. The effect is far finer.

The plan of the three temples is really the same; each is only a part of the whole design. All three are tetrastyle and pseudo-peripteral; the four columns of the portico support an architrave and a triangular pediment. M. Saladin points out in one of his interesting articles about the Roman remains in North Africa



*Baron H. de S. S.*

ARCH OF TRIUMPH, SBEITLA.



that the detail of some of the work in these temples is original and far more independent than is usual. The temples are raised on a stylobate and approached by flights of steps.

Sufetula was a great city in Roman times ; the name may have been derived from the old Karthaginian title for her magistrates—*suffetes*—but it does not seem at all certain, or indeed particularly likely. It was a city, then a colony ; fell into the clutches of the Vandals and was made into a fortified place by the Byzantines. With the advent of the Byzantines comes all that we know of its history.

On the 22nd of June, A.D. 533, the Greek Army left Constantinople under the command of Belisarius, bound for Karthage. It was a " holy war," undertaken to succour the distressed Christians, and the soldiers were formally blessed by the patriarch and were inspected by the Emperor Justinian on their departure. After three months at sea, the troops were safely disembarked on the east coast of Tunisia, and marched to Karthage without opposition. Received as liberators from the intolerable oppression of the Vandals, who had now become disorganised and incapable of serious opposition, the newcomers settled down for an occupation that lasted a hundred years.

If they had not encountered any serious opposition on their arrival, the Byzantines were soon to experience the enmity of Berbers and Arabs, tribes that began their accustomed guerilla warfare and were by no means to be despised. Exposed to constant danger from the desert and the mountains, as well as not feeling secure

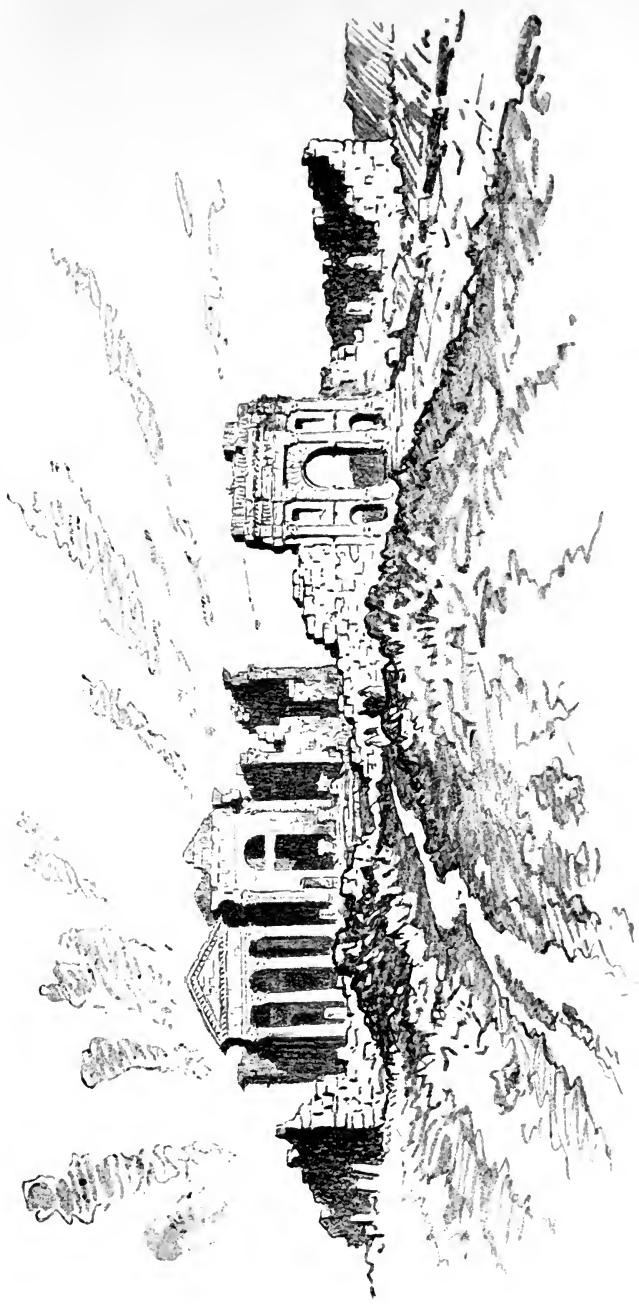
as to the return of the Vandals reinforced by the Turks, the Byzantines built up fortifications with feverish haste. As we have seen at Tebessa and other places, they used the material that came to hand, and they were often terrible sinners in the way they broke up statues and put inscriptions in upside down to fill a vacuum.

They were in a hurry to protect themselves, and their scheme of fortification was vast ; it was always on the same plan. A great open space, surrounded by high walls flanked by strong towers, contained immense buildings. The basilicas, built on the plan of the old Courts of Justice, were often of great size and strength ; the palaces and the very few buildings that they took the trouble to build were all on a large scale. Having got the necessities of existence inside strong walls, they did not bother about restoring the Roman temples and baths and palaces that lay about in heaps. They used what material they wanted and left the remainder where it lay.

In the case of Sufetula, the Greeks simply reinforced the temple walls, building them up with a mixture of small stones, carelessly assembled : what they did inside the temples we can only conjecture, though we have a certain amount of information on the subject.

In 398, the Emperor Honorius made a decree authorising the churches to use the temples and their enclosures, and to break up the images of the gods. This latter suggestion was carried out at Sufetula with enthusiasm, and the result was a hand-to-hand fight in which sixty Christians were killed. Saint Augustine,





*Baron Hütten*

THE TEMPLES OF THE CAPITOL, SBEITLA.



then Bishop of Hippone, wrote to the pagan citizens of Sufetula about it.

“Your crime has stained with blood the temples and public places,” he wrote. “You have flouted Roman law, insulted and spoken evil of the Emperor. The man amongst you who has killed the greatest number is praised, and you give him a place in your Councils.”

The pagans replied that the Christians had begun it by smashing the statue of Herakles.

“Very well,” said the Bishop. “We will give you back your statue of Herakles and we will paint him red to enhance the brilliance of your sacred ceremonies. Since you maintain that this Herakles was yours, we will subscribe to give you a new god. But give us back our brothers that you have murdered!”

Whether the Bishop’s sarcasm had a due effect or not does not appear, but the disturbed state of any town is evident when such an incident could occur. The Byzantine rule was growing yearly weaker, the position of the Christian population of Northern Africa was becoming precarious when, in the year 647, the Patrician Gregory, Governor of the Byzantine province of Africa, put an end to it all by his over-reaching ambition. This Gregory, whose father had held the same position as Exarch of Africa, was a man of good family who had a desire to break away from Byzantine rule and to found an independent dynasty. With this ambition always in view, he cultivated the friendship of the Berbers and succeeded, through their support, in getting himself proclaimed Tyrant of

Africa. He should have held his court at Karthage, which was still the most important city in the country, but he appears to have lived at Timgad, where he founded a basilica, before he decided on removing the seat of government to Sufetula. Perhaps he felt safer there, where he was farther off from those who still upheld the tottering authority of the Empire. At any rate he succeeded in establishing his rule over the whole country from Tripoli to Tangier, and he had his capital at Sufetula.

In the year of grace 647, the Khalif of Baghdad, Othman, determined to wrest Africa from Byzantium and from this usurping Christian kinglet ; so he sent his brother, Abdulla Ibn Saad, with a large army to effect the conquest. Abdulla marched by Cyrene and Tripoli, and eventually encamped not far from Sufetula. Gregory's army does not seem to have been content to keep inside the fortress, for we hear of daily fights between the two forces which continued up to midday, when the great heat forced them to stop. These encounters went on for some time without a decided advantage to either side.

The story, as it is told by An-Noweiri, is distinctly dramatic and, for that reason, grave historians have shaken their heads over it—as if, forsooth, real life were not far more dramatic than fiction !

An-Noweiri says that a rumour grew in Abdulla's camp to the effect that Gregory had sent a herald round Sufetula proclaiming that he would give a hundred thousand dinars and the hand of his daughter to anyone who would slay Abdulla. After this news got about, Abdulla, very naturally, retired to his tent

and did not venture out. The second-in-command, Az Zohri, not seeing his commander anywhere about, went to his tent to ask the reason, and, when he heard it, he immediately proposed a counter-proclamation to the effect that anyone who slew Gregory should have a hundred thousand dinars and his daughter.

Now reports of the exceeding beauty of the daughter were passed on by those who had caught sight of her riding to battle with her father, shielding her face with a fan of peacocks' feathers and dressed in the most wonderful robes. The man who killed Gregory would therefore win a double prize.

Az Zohri was evidently too clever for his adversaries. He pretended to retire at the usual hour of midday, waited till the Roums had flung off their armour and were doubtless sprawling about in the cool of the tents that they had set up opposite those of the enemy. Az Zohri slew the Patrician Gregory with his own hand, and was afterwards given the promised reward and the hand of Gregory's daughter.

There is another ending to the story, which is given by some Arab writers. Az Zohri, so they say, despised the proud daughter of Djoredjin, as they called Gregory (Idrisi calls him "the great King Gorgès"), and handed her over to an Arab who came from Coba, a place near Mecca. This man placed her on a camel and, mounting another himself, started on the long journey to the Hidjaz. As they went along, he kept on crooning a verse that he improvised as he went along, marking the rhythm, no doubt, by the long swing of his *mehari's* stride, for that is the way that all Arab verse, whether good or bad, is composed. No

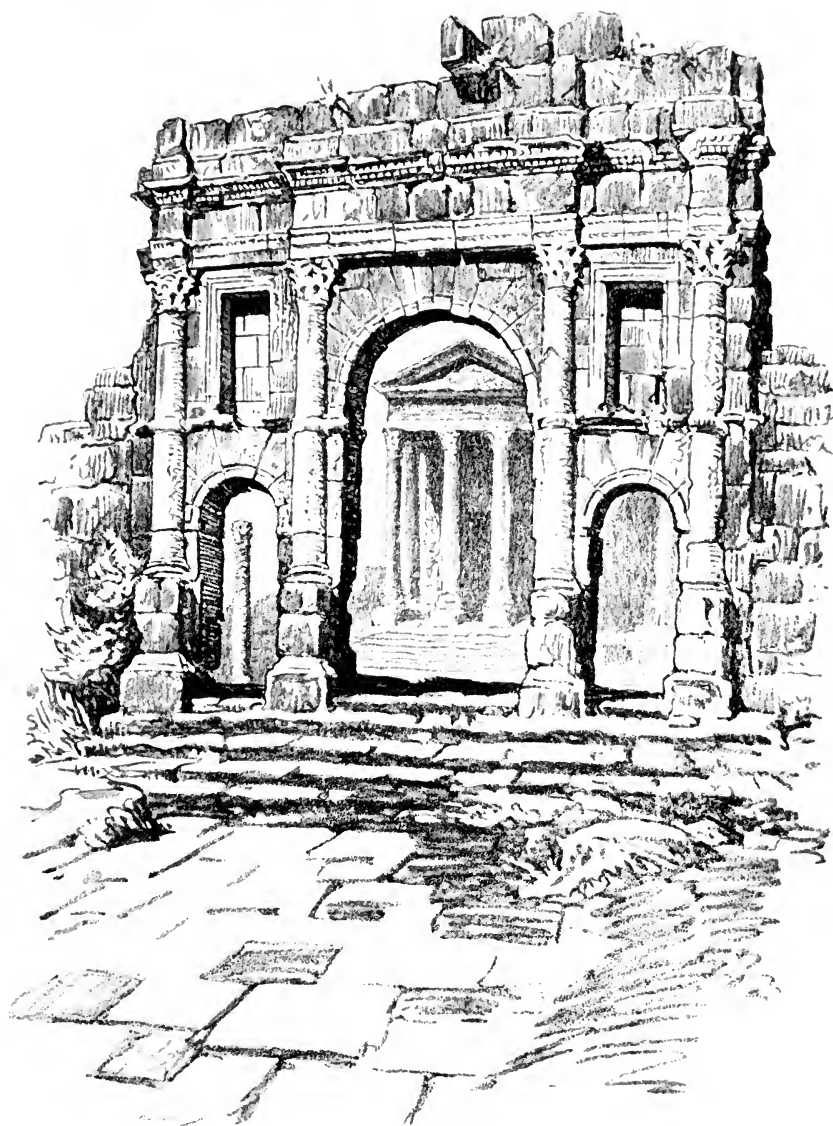
doubt there were many variations on this theme, but the burden was this :

Daughter of Djoredjin, you shall go on foot in your time,  
In the Hidjaz your mistress waits for you ;  
You shall carry water in a pitcher at Coba !

The lady got tired of this endless song, and she asked one who accompanied them " what the dog was saying." When she was told the meaning of the words, the luckless lady threw herself from her camel and broke her neck.

The treasure found in Sufetula, probably hidden away in the chambers beneath the temples, was so great that every horseman was given three thousand dinars and every foot soldier one thousand. The fall of Gregory was the beginning of the end as far as the Byzantine empire was concerned. Fifty years later Al Kahina made her gallant stand against the Arab invaders, but it failed, as we have seen. The Arabs brought the country under the rule of Islam, and it remained subject to the followers of the Prophet, whether Arabs or converted Berbers or Turkish corsairs, until the French invasion of Algeria in 1830.

We have hitherto only considered the three Capitoline temples and the Heiron, but there are also remains of the great city that once covered the plateau to the north of the Capitol. We see important remains of Byzantine churches here, in one of which was found a beautiful baptismal font entirely lined with mosaic ; there are the ruins of some baths and those of a theatre, which occupied a commanding position overlooking the Oued Sbeitla. Further along to the north we find



*Baudouin Volot.*

THE ARCH OF ANTONINUS PIUS, SBEITLA.





the remains of several churches, a temple and the amphitheatre, which must have been placed outside the city walls.

Leaving these ruins, which are not nearly so interesting to most people as are the beautiful temples that are the glory of Sbeitla, we wander down to the brink of the river to admire the three arches of a viaduct that span its course, while down by the riverside we can watch the clear waters bubbling over the limestone of the banks and look up at the strongly-built, buttressed piers that are strengthened by stone courses from an older building. The aqueduct, which also served as a viaduct, is said to have replaced an older one ; it forms a most picturesque object in the rocky Oued Sbeitla. Part of the abundant water supply has been diverted to supply Sfax.

The river, which is little more than a stream, though the water is abundant, starts among the hills which diverge a little higher up in the valley to the north-east and north-west ; in the beginning of its course it runs through a very deep and narrow gorge, and finally loses itself in the sand.

Former travellers speak of juniper-trees and " white firs," but there are now no trees upon the Capitol hill ; neither are modern visitors disturbed by the lions that " seriously incommoded " Bruce when he camped in the neighbourhood.

Years ago a certain Sidi Mustapha Ben Azooz of Nefta started to build a new town near the aqueduct, intending to profit by the abundant water supply, only too rare in all this region. Taking a leaf out of the Byzantine book of evil deeds, he used material

from the ruins of the Capitol, smashing up delicate marble carvings to make into mortar, and boring holes in priceless columns for blasting purposes. He gave up the idea eventually, but not before having done a great deal of damage.

There is a great deal of interest to be found in a leisurely examination of the detail of the architecture at Sbeitla. The centre temple has some very good specimens of composite decoration, one of the capitals being specially fine. The whole scene with the enclosing wall, where you can see the Byzantine reinforcements, and the golden stone stained to saffron of the triad of temples, is one of those that is not easily forgotten.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SFAX AND THE LESSER SYRTIS

WHY is it that some places take one's fancy so much more than others? The natural advantages of a place, the surroundings, the buildings, may be no more beautiful or remarkable than those of many others, but there is a mysterious something that attracts, which is rather difficult to define.

Sfax has a special attraction for me. It is a strange place, picturesque and rather homely in character, inhabited by people who are curious and very friendly. In spite of the grim, battlemented walls that surround the Arab Medina, there is something free and lively about it, a breath of the sea that blows health-giving air into the crowded streets. The peculiar character of the town, the fascination of its busy, crowded streets, made me forget all about the vanished city of Taparura, which it has replaced. Bother the past! For the moment, the present is much more entertaining.

Truth to tell, very little is known of the past history of Sfax, other than we have found in so many records of vanished cities in all this region. Phœnicia, Rome, warring tribes of Arabs, Spanish ships sailing in the bay, corsairs and Turks, all the usual elements are here that made history in Northern Africa. Other places on this coast have had more stirring histories.

Susa was the scene of more dramatic events, such as the landing of Hannibal and his return after the disaster at Zama; from Mahdia he set forth on his exile, from which he was never to return; and not far off are the ruins of Thapsus, where Cæsar vanquished the Pompeians, after marking time for three months hereabouts. Sfax was often taken and sacked; it was under the rule of the various Arab dynasties as well as under that of Byzantium and Sicily; but there is little that need detain us. Turning over the pages of the journal of Sheikh At Tidjani, written in the fourteenth century and published in French in the *Journal Asiatique* of 1852, I find a story which may find a place here as having a certain dramatic interest. It might safely furnish a theme for a Grand Guignol sketch.

Sheikh At Tidjani begins by praising the town of Sfax and the country round, which he says is called the Sahel on account of the depth of the shade of the trees that are planted all along its length and breadth. He then remarks (I cannot help resenting this) that a certain prince called Sfax the Curse of God, and that when he told people he disliked to go to the Curse of God they set out immediately for Sfax. An ill-natured story, evidently invented by someone who had a grudge against the place.

The Sheikh also noticed the double ramparts of Sfax between which, then, as now, several horsemen could ride abreast, and he remarked that the Byzantine owners of Sfax held sovereignty over a hundred thousand towns, villages and forts. When they wanted to raise an army all they had to do was to



*Benson H. H. H. H.*

THE STREET OF THE BLACKSMITHS, SFAX.



demand a golden dinar and a horseman from each one. As M. Cagnat says somewhere, the astonishment that one feels when looking at the fortifications set up by the Byzantines in Africa, is only equalled by the reflection that they were not able to defend themselves against the Arabs.

But to get to the story.

King Roger of Sicily attacked and took Sfax in the year 543 of the Hegira ; when he left he took with him two hostages, of whom one was Sheikh Aboul Hassan-al-Feriani, the prefect of police. He entrusted the government of the town to the son of this man, Omar, thinking, doubtless, that the son would behave honourably to save his father from punishment. His scheme, however, clear as it was, miscarried. Al-Feriani took leave of his son with these words :

“ I am getting old, and the time of my death is drawing near ; I will give my life for the Mussulmans. If any opportunity offers, rise up against the Christians and massacre them.”

When opportunity served, Omar obeyed his father's instructions : he fell on the Christians and massacred them without pity. When William of Sicily, son of King Roger, heard of this terrible event, he despatched a messenger to Sfax, with instructions to tell Omar that his father would die if he did not instantly submit.

The messenger returned to Sicily with a strange story. He said that he could not land at Sfax because immediately after the ship came into port the sea gate was opened with a great noise, and a multitude

of people ran out, crying, "*Allah Akbar!*" They carried with them a coffin which they placed on the quay, and Omar read prayers over it, afterwards receiving condolences from those who accompanied him. The ceremony completed, the coffin was carried in, the people followed it, and the gates were closed.

When the envoy sent in the King's message and asked to be taken to Omar to receive the answer, he was told that the Governor was too busy receiving condolences on the death of his father, and it was further explained to him that the coffin he had seen symbolised that of the old Sheikh.

"The scene that you have witnessed is the reply to your message."

The King was furious. Al-Feriani was forthwith hanged, and met his death reciting the Qur'an with his last breath.

A grim drama, showing the spirit of sacrifice side by side with the undying hatred of the Christian that animated the followers of the Prophet.

Sfax, as we see it to-day, is a cheerful, busy town, pleasant and picturesque even in the modern quarter. The hotel where we stayed looks out on to a square planted with little trees, which has white houses on either side, and the modern Moorish building in which the interesting collection of mosaics and Roman remains is housed, just opposite. The Boulevard de France, with its double avenue of tall palm-trees, leads to the Rue de la République, at the end of which is the walled Arab town. It is here that the charm begins to work.



The covered Suq and the adjoining streets run up and down hill ; in the former are to be found many things always seen in Arab markets, together with some that are peculiar to the town. Not only is Sfax a regular hive of workers, it is also a *dépôt* for outside industries, which include oil, wool, dates and sponges. It is, of course, a centre of the fishing industry, and in the streets set apart for different corporations can be seen the blacksmiths and dyers and others that drive a flourishing trade here. The busy scene presented by almost any street in the Medina is in direct contrast to the usually accepted idea of Oriental laziness : the population works cheerfully, and can be seen at work, as much of it is carried on in the open street.

Take the Blacksmiths' Street, of which we have a characteristic drawing, showing the typical wooden balconies on the houses that are reached by an outer staircase, turning the tenements into what is, practically, a series of flats. Looking down the street you see, facing you, the whitewashed minaret of the Zaouïa of Sidi Abd-al-Kader, in the upper part of which, under the crowning metal dome, is a funny little wooden gallery painted bright red. This is a very unusual feature and one that we had not seen anywhere else, as the gallery in which the mueddhin calls to prayer is always composed of the same stone as the minaret itself. The minarets of Sfax, with these queer little painted galleries, give the place an original air, as do the balconies in the Rue des Forgerons.

Up and down the busy street a crowd of people

pass, coming from the country by the gate near the *zaouïa*, or through the Suq from the opposite direction. The male Sfaxiote usually wears the brown *gadroun*, a woollen blouse, woven in the town, and some of them wear the green turban, showing that they belong to the tribe of the Prophet. On foot or on donkey-back they go their ways, exchanging remarks with the denizens of the street, talking loudly, with sweeping gestures, as their way is. A youth with a tray, on which he has a store of flat cakes for sale, is more than usually persistent in his request not only for a photograph, but for a proof to be sent to him.

"*Prenez ma table*," he said persuasively in his funny French, seeming to be more anxious to have his "table" immortalised than himself. The children crowded round him, and the result was not so good as it might have been, but the print was duly posted to an address in the Suq.

The blacksmiths' forges in this street are interesting, because of the prehistoric bellows that they use; there are also yards behind the houses where camels and donkeys are stabled. If you are tired of the business quarter of Sfax you can wander in the Jewellers' Street and perhaps pick up some curious old Oriental jewellery: wherever you go you are sure to find something amusing.

Traces of vanished Taparura are hard to find. Bits of the olden city are used in the Turkish Qasba and in the rather beautiful old mosque, which one is not allowed to enter. The exterior of this mosque, that dates from the thirteenth century, has arcadings in

the plaster and some Cufic lettering ; otherwise, in its intense simplicity, it is almost unadorned.

The Driba, or Hall of Justice, has an interesting interior, which can be visited. More attractive, to my mind, are the quays, where sailors congregate, who may have been fishing for octopus or connected with the sponge divers, or merely occupied with the ordinary industries of a seaside town. In the evening, when the crowd had dispersed and the sun was pouring its last level rays through the lateen-rigged fishing boats, parked up in rows along the mole, the scene was changed. The dying sun outlined each mast and bulwark and furled sail with gold ; a sort of golden haze glowed beyond the mass of the ships, merging sea and sky in one radiance of light. And then a little rowing-boat, in which were two men and a woman, put out to sea, bound on some faery quest, no doubt. What else could take them out at this hour when everything appeared romantic, unusual ? The sun dipped lower and the glory faded, and the little boat disappeared into the dusk.

At the other end of the Lesser Syrtis is an island, from which many of the sailors, occupied in the extensive fishery of the bay, are drawn. The island of Djerba, formerly known as the Isle of Meninx, has a certain literary flavour about it derived from the writings of Flaubert and others, who speak of it as the Island of the Lotophagi, another old title, indicating the habits of the islanders, who fed on the fruit of the lotus. That such a habit should strike one as romantic is evident. Not only do we picture to ourselves moon-eyed individuals, lying beside a still pool,

stretching out pale hands to the lilies lying on the face of the water, but we remember that the lotus is the symbolic flower of Egypt and that tradition said whoever ate of its fruit forgot their country.

It is rather a drop from these altitudes to discover that a very common plant known as the *Zizyphus Lotus*, which has a barely edible fruit, once grew here though it now appears to be extinct. So the lotus-eaters of Djerba exist rather in the imagination than in reality.

The island has had a more than usually exciting history; its possession was eagerly disputed by all those who had intentions of raiding the coast. Normans of Sicily, Spaniards, Turks, Arabs, each have held it in turn; a Turkish admiral and his lieutenant, the celebrated pirate Dragut, took it from the Spaniards by a ruse and massacred the garrison. The mound of human skulls that they made after the battle formed a grim war memorial in Djerba until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Dragut's first exploit was the taking of five Venetian galleys in the waters of Paxos; after peace was concluded between Venice and the Porte he seems to have turned his attention elsewhere, being specially annoying always to the Spaniards. Among the desperate characters that he collected round him in the island of Djerba were people of many nationalities, who perhaps ate the fruit of the lotus and forgot their birthplaces to become members of a body of Barbary pirates. The more peaceful inhabitants of these days are also of mixed nationality—Greeks and Italians,

who come for the sponge-diving, Turks and Berbers and Arabs—but there is no necessity for them to forswear their native land.

Andrea Doria, in command of fifty-five galleys belonging to the fleet of the Emperor Charles V, sailed up and down the Lesser Syrtis, calling at all the ports, searching for Dragut ; but not a trace of the corsair could be found.

Doria's nephew and reputed heir, Giannettino, who wanted to do something to ingratiate himself with his uncle, hearing that Dragut might often be found on the coast of Sardinia, set out in search of him. When his fleet suddenly appeared in La Giralata, a harbour between Calvi and Bastia, he saw Dragut sitting quietly on the shore, dividing up booty and prisoners among his henchmen. The blow was too sudden ; Dragut, with all his courage and his quick resourcefulness, could do nothing. His Turkish bandits fled up into the hills, the rest refused to fight ; he himself was taken prisoner and presented by the triumphant Giannettino to Uncle Andrea. Andrea promptly put the pirate chief in prison and loaded him with chains, where he was visited by Parisot, who was later Grand Master of the Knights of Malta.

" Fortune of war," said Parisot, who had himself been chained to his oar in one of Dragut's galleys.

" Change of luck," was the laconic reply.

In 1543, a few years after this incident, Barbarossa succeeded in ransoming his favourite, and Dragut lost no time in getting back to his old haunts on the island of Djerba. He asked for an armed galleot

with a fighting crew, which he obtained, and in four years he owned a fleet. He kept a fakir who cast the horoscope of each expedition that he carried out, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that he cast a horary figure; and his luck for a long time was proverbial. Some of his exploits, like his midnight storming of Mahdia, were famous, and would have done credit to many a legitimate commander. The Sultan, whose forces he had insulted, gave him permission to have a beacon at the prow of his galley and allowed him a pension. Truly an attractive scoundrel, whose memory lingers about the waters of the Lesser Syrtis!

On the way to Gabès and Djerba, a visit must be paid to the tremendous olive plantations round about the Toual-ach-Cheridi, distant only a few miles from Sfax. The main part of these scientifically-planted and cared-for olives belongs to French capitalists, who are interested in the oil trade. The result is overpowering rather than beautiful. From the top of some rising ground a view of this great plantation is obtained; it extends for miles and miles, as far as the eye can see. The olives are planted diagonally on red earth; the monotony of the whole scene is indescribable. Excellent as a commercial enterprise it is not attractive to the passer-by, because the olives are not fine specimens of trees. There is none of the beauty of gnarled stems and twisted branches that we see in the older olive-groves of Italy or the south of France.

The road to Gabès lies round the southern curve of the bay; the fertile Sahel has given way to

unproductive land which is not either "the Desert or the Sown," but partakes of both.

Gabès is situated on the banks of a river and in the midst of a glorious oasis, in which are thousands on thousands of palm-trees. Gabès was Tacape in days gone by, when it was, as it is now, the capital of the district ; it figures often in the chronicles of the Arab historians.

The hotel where we lunched was in the French town, and opposite to it a charming garden lay along the bank of a winding river. Tropical vegetation and, for the first time during our journey, a touch of semi-tropical heat, made me realise that we were now actually approaching the Great Sahara Desert, round which my thoughts had for so long been centred.

In this oasis those who cannot travel farther can, at least, see as fine scenery as is anywhere to be found. The winding river, with stately palms reflected on its surface, the picturesque native towns of the Grande-Djara and Menzel, in which classic pillars prop up shanties in the market-place, have great attractions. We hurried past Gabès on our way to the desert, and my recollections, other than those connected with the first introduction to the scenery of an oasis, are concerned with a baby desert fox that was made a pet of in the hotel, and an old Arab who wore a devil mask and danced up and down to the thrumming of a drum outside Menzel.

Lovers of beautiful scenery and those interested in quaint places and customs, can, so I understand, find joys without end in this oasis. That we had to

leave it unexplored was unfortunate, but the desert called, and the tyrant Time refused to stand still, even for a moment, and even in the land of the lotus-eaters, which should have exercised a soothing influence over his immemorial impatience.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE SAHARA

THE desert is a most poignant affair when all is said and done. You must either love it or hate it, for there is no middle course. I cannot imagine anyone saying, "I rather like the desert," or "I don't think I care much for life in the desert." The idea is unthinkable. You must forget your ordinarily reserved and even condescending manner of speaking of other parts of the earth, the half-hearted approval that has always a reserve behind it, for there is no hedging about the desert. You must either rave about its vast, open spaces and superb loneliness, or you must curse its monotony; if you are temperamental you may do both. But any sort of calm indifference is frankly impossible.

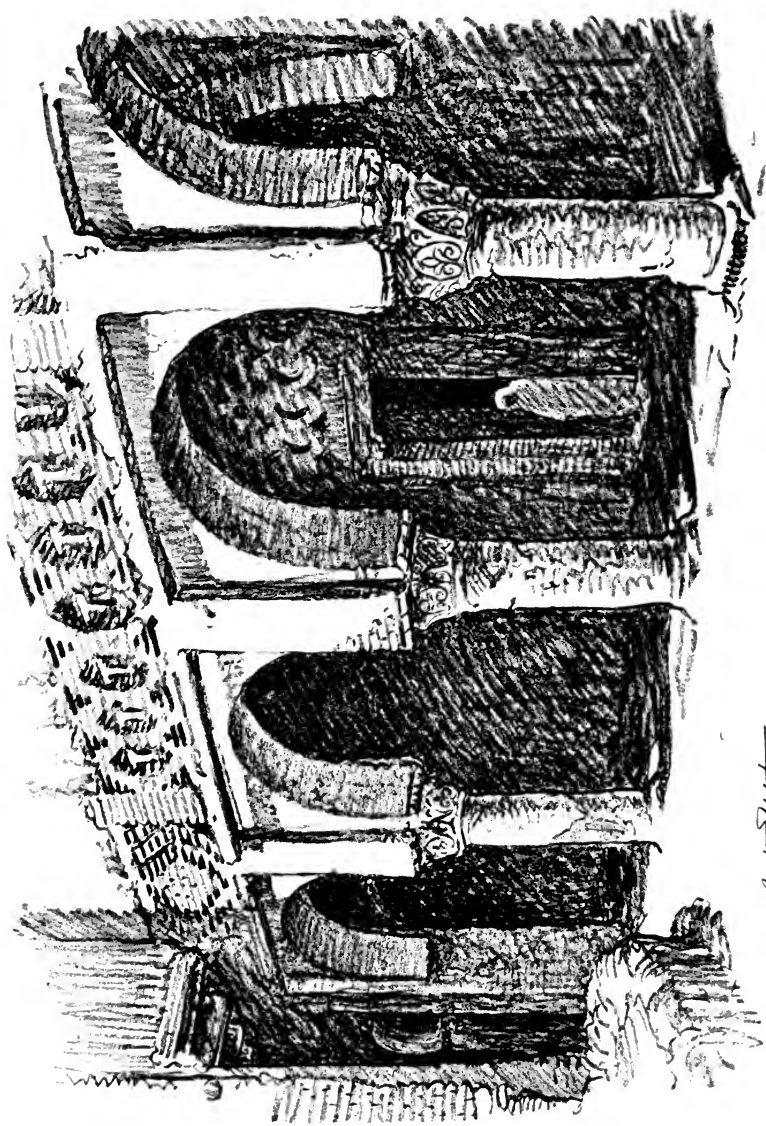
Many people are disappointed at the outset, especially when it is a case of wide plains dotted with scrub, like plums in a pudding, as it often is in the Sahara; those who expect to see golden sand rolling away to a mirage and nothing else will become restive, for they expect what is only one phase of the giant that sprawls over so vast a tract of the land of Moghrib. There are stretches of hard-baked earth, punctured with tufts of halfa grass, great steppes—indefinite, far-reaching; the eyes stretch over them and see nothing living. There are stretches of sand that have enough scrub on them to furnish the camels with fodder, and

there you may see the odd, rather human animals turning away in their self-conscious manner from unnecessary contact with human beings. People call them stupid and vicious, but they look neither. It is true they can kick both ways, which may be awkward, and they know how to bite with their long, yellow teeth, but their big brown eyes have a pathetic expression.

"I know," the camel seems to say, as he sidles away awkwardly, "that I am unique. I give myself airs of superiority, but it's a lonely business, after all. No friends outside the family!"

Those who have their first view of the desert at the famous gorge of Al Kantara have a most dramatic start on their adventure; it is a sight that makes the most hardened traveller draw a long breath. More than one of them has recorded his feelings as he stood on the Roman bridge, built by the Legions so long ago, and looked over the illimitable plain before him. Approaching the desert from Gabès, the sensation is less intense, the impression less vivid. But, in whatever manner you begin, you are bound to get into the heart of the Sahara before long. And the wonder of it steals on you, makes you long to be alone, to live long days and nights in the perfect peace of a place cut off from the tiresome problems of existence.

One of the interesting points about the desert is the change of colour that takes place as the day advances. In the middle of the day all colour seems to vanish: the sand is then dazzlingly white, the shadows curiously black. As the day wanes, the sand gets back its golden hue, the shadows become



*Ant. F. Wilson.*

BRICK ARCADE, TOZEUR.



blue, and the sunset may throw a flaming mantle over some distant sandhill, making it appear like the reflection of a great fire. And then the night!—all white and still, with stars shining out of a summer night sky. . . .

To appreciate the desert, one should know it well, but for those who can only devote a limited time to its transit, it is well worth the effort. You will either love it or loathe it, and, in either case, the impressions are so strong that they remain with you as personal possessions. After all, did not one of the great French novelists say that he relied on the impressions of the first forty-eight hours when he wanted to describe a place?

Do not be discouraged if you have only a short time to spend here. Even a brief acquaintance with anything so unique will teach something. The variety in the monotony is in itself a study, after the endless monotony of the variety show we call "life" in civilised cities.

Another great feature of the desert is the marvellous clarity of the atmosphere, the sane and healthy breezes that blow over the great spaces where there is little human habitation; even the hot breath of the ham-seen wind, that enemy of desert travel, is clean and clear. The trembling of the atmosphere often makes a softness in the distance, as it helps to create the mirage that we see so constantly in the heat of the day; it gives a strange air of unreality to the scene. Faint blues and subtle shades of pink and mauve flit over the distance, while the nearer, sun-baked earth or golden sand takes on russet hues.

The curious part of desert travel is that, as the sands shift with the wind, the whole lie of the land is changed, and the great posts that are set up to guide the traveller are often quite misplaced. The desert six-wheeled Renault cars used by the Transatlantic Company for these journeys are wonderfully comfortable, and they race up and down the sand-dunes in a manner that adds to the amusement of an unusual manner of progression. In spite of the flatness of the Sahara, taken in its immensity, the sand-dunes rise up in all sorts of queer shapes and provide endless little hills in some of the regions we pass through.

The first place that we stopped at after leaving Gabès was Al Hamma, the *Aquæ Tacapitanæ* of the Romans, who meet us at every turn in the desert, just as they did in the cultivated land farther north and east. Al Hamma is an oasis with some thousands of date-palms and a couple of Arab villages nestling among them—Al Kasr and Debdaïa. At the former are the hot sulphur springs that come bubbling up out of the earth to supply a quaint little establishment of baths, the foundation of which is Roman. After a long day spent motoring the very idea of a hot bath was delightful, and we lost no time in repairing to them. Here we found an Arab woman in charge, who recommended us to wait till the water had cooled, but I asked to have mine at its natural heat.

The guardian of the place took me down some steps into a stone passage, from which three or four doors led into little dressing-rooms, hardly larger

than the baths, which seemed to be made of slate, or some dark, cool substance. Inside the bath the hot water bubbled in at one end and went out at the other, making a delicious bath, with the water changing all the time.

The rest-house at Al Hamma is quite comfortable and rather out of the common ; its big, white-washed sitting-room, with a horseshoe arch and some quite decent bedrooms, are built round a patio that reminded me of Spain—all white-washed, and having blue tiles on the walls and a raised garden in the middle with a well in the centre.

After an early start the next morning we passed through the oasis and out into the open steppes, with some wild flowers—white broom and mesembryanthemum—among the coarse grass and scrub ; then into a fairyland of sand, all golden and untrodden, rolling away into infinity. A picnic lunch at Kabiri left us ready to start on the most novel part of the day's journey—the trek across the salt expanse of the Chott Djerid. I had of course read about these dried-up lakes covered with a thick coating of salt, but I was not prepared for the strange scene before us.

Some recent rain had left a little surface water, which is only visible at such seasons ; we splashed through it at times as we picked our way across the waste of whiteness, taking the only track that is firm enough for traffic. A mistake in the road, which is marked out in the usual way by occasional posts, might lead to disaster.

On this day, which had dawned so splendidly, the

wind rose in the afternoon, taking all the colour out of the landscape even before we got to this world of whiteness. The distance disappeared in a sort of colourless haze, sky and earth mingled, so that you could not tell where one ended and the other began.

If the *chott* loomed weirdly as it stretched out before us, it was infinitely more curious when we got into the middle of it. It was like a vision of the North Pole. On either side a white expanse lay, which glistened like crystal near to us and ended in a faint rim which seemed to outline the round world, where it met the haze that hid the hills on the farther side of the lake; the sky was only very faint blue overhead, paling down till it was almost white at the horizon.

There was something fairy-like about this scene, which the intense silence and the disappearance of the outer world of hill and dale intensified. I was quite unable to take any interest in it as a natural phenomenon; it did not seem to matter that some people said the whole region had once been a lake reaching out to the Gulf of Gabès, and other people denied the possibility. It seemed far more probable that, had one been alone, one might have heard the faint music of the desert, which, like that of the faery-haunted glens and moors of Scotland and Ireland, is generally fatal to the listener; or one might have seen one of those wonderful visions which make the actual mirage of the desert pale by comparison. In such a mood the only author who appealed to me at all was Herodotus of Helicarnassus, who prefaces his



hair-raising stories of the desert and its inhabitants with the magic words, "They say."

He tells us that the Chott Djerid, on which we were travelling in a manner he little dreamed of, was called Lake Tritonis in his day, and that people lived near it who sacrificed to Minerva, and after her to Triton and Neptune. West of the river Triton were people who wore hair only on the right side of their heads and daubed their bodies with vermilion: "'They say' they are descended from the men who came from Troy." He tells us in his chatty way of other people who painted themselves vermilion and who ate monkeys, while the Troglodytes, whose country we ought to have visited after leaving Gabès, ate snakes. He tells us of an island (I forget where it was, but it fits in with the atmosphere here) on which virgins drew up gold dust out of a lake by means of feathers daubed with pitch—"Whether this be true I know not." "The Troglodytes," he remarks, "speak a language like no other, and screech like bats"; while another tribe that inhabited the desert, who had no personal names, had acquired a habit of meeting daily to curse the sun that dried up all the pasture and left the world arid and dry.

In the days when Herodotus jotted down these facts on his tablets all this region was full of wild beasts. Nothing shows the gradual transformation of the Sahara more than the change in animal life. But there seem to be no beasts, wild or tame, and no birds in all this strange and silent realm that appeared to extend to the round rim of the world. It was with something of an effort that a return to more every-day

conditions was made as we reached the further shore.

Tozeur, one of the pearls of the Djerid, was the first place that we stopped at after crossing the salt lake. It is a wonderful place, containing a forest of domes and a multitude of narrow streets. It is the capital of the Djerid.

The Bled-al-Djerid—the country of palms—contains the four oases of Tozeur, Nefta, Al Oudiane, and Al Hamma, all of them lying between the Chott-al-Djerid and another dried-up lake of the same character, the Chott Kharsa. Of these towns, or collection of villages, all of them standing among thousands of date-palms, Nefta is, to my mind, far the most attractive.

It is true that I saw Tozeur under adverse weather conditions. The wind, that had been rising all the afternoon, now became a howling tempest by night, and in the morning there was nothing to be seen but sandstorms; even through closed windows the red sand crept, while in the open courtyard of the hotel it blew in eddies. The outdoor world was a nightmare that day, and I have never been able to understand how the indefatigable artist found shelter enough to enable him to make several sketches. My only activity consisted in taking a photograph of some people who were blown about, almost disappearing in clouds of sand, and my only consolation the knowledge that the desert had shown us all its tricks. We had seen it in perfect weather, and we had now a specimen of it at its worst—interesting, but detestable, and a pure waste of time.

Tozeur, once Thusurus, or Tisurus, is often mentioned

by Arab writers. All the Djerid district was the scene of endless unnecessary fighting, and many tales of horror are told, especially during the fifty years' struggle between the last of the Almoravides and the supplanting Almohades. The story of this period is told by M. Alfred Bel in a monograph that throws much light on the exploits of the last representatives of the older dynasty—a branch that reigned in the Balearic Isles and had escaped the general downfall of their family. Prince Ali Ben Ghanya landed at Bougie in the year 1184-5, took that city, and started a campaign against the Almohades. When affairs were not going too well on the coast, Ali came down through the Hodna to the region of the *chotts*, where he bribed a section of the Arab population to support him, and laid siege to Tozeur.

Tozeur, according to At Tijani, was a very ancient foundation. "It is not possible," he wrote, "considering its great antiquity, to fix a date for the foundation of Tozeur. Some historians pretend that it goes back to the period that followed the deluge of Noah."

However that may be, it was evidently a place of some importance before the Romans came, as occupying a position on the caravan route from the interior of the Sahara to the coast; it became a very rich corporation, independently of the great forest of date-palms that provided the chief industry.

Another legend as to the foundation of the city, which is not quite so improbable, is that of a certain lady named Tozeur, who started some pottery works at Constantine. The inhabitants disliked the smoke

that came from her furnace and turned her out, so she went into the desert and founded a pottery there, where no one could object to her chimneys. Round that pottery a town grew up, and increased in importance as the caravan trade developed.

To Tozeur came Ali Ben Ghanya in an evil day. He laid siege to it, but would never have reduced it had not traitors from within opened the doors. Ali stands out as a cruel, vindictive tyrant, one whose word was never as good as his bond, who could always be bribed, but who could never be approached through the channels of pity. In this case he accepted ransoms from those who could afford to pay, executed and cast into a pit all those who could not. The place was called afterwards "The Pit of the Martyrs" by those who never forgot his cruelty.

Ali left Tozeur ruined, having also cut down hundreds of the palm-trees, and went his way to Gabès. He allowed his rabble of an army to commit any excess, and was a regular curse to the whole country, which he speedily reduced and kept under his control. Those were the days when every successful robber dubbed himself a king of some little district; and a man whom he alternately fought and made friends with was an Armenian general in command of a body of Turkish troops, named Qaraqouch. These two ruled the Djerid between them when they were not fighting each other.

It is comforting to learn that Ali, after committing countless crimes against humanity, died of his wounds outside Al Hamma; and his brother Yahia, a far

greater man, though not above suspicion, carried on the fight for fifty years.

Tozeur was often an object of contention during these years of conflict, and the original town disappeared and was built up again more than once. When At Tijani saw it in the fourteenth century it was again a flourishing city. He gives rather a charming description of it. He speaks of the many streams that unite near the town and supply it with such an abundance of water that private individuals can divert it for their own use. A syndicate was then formed, consisting of some of the principal people in the city, to apportion out the quantity of water allowed to each one.

There were two mosques in the town at that time and public baths, as well as a great dyeing industry. At Tijani describes the Bab-al-Manschour, outside which the waters of the various streams met. Here the dyers would spread out their coloured garments and embroidered stuffs on the banks, till they looked like a "rich parterre."

According to this writer, the inhabitants of Tozeur were "Roums"—Greeks left from the Byzantine occupation—who had embraced Islamism to "save their days," together with Arabs and Berbers. Among the unpleasant habits of the townsfolk of this desert town was that of eating dogs. When he asked someone if this were true, before putting it down in his diary as a fact, his friend replied that they did, and that dog as a food was "delicious"—which puts them in the category of cannibals to our twentieth-century ideas.

My acquaintance with Tozeur is limited to a moonlight stroll, of which I have a very vivid remembrance.

After a day of blinding sandstorms, the night was perfectly clear. There was no wind, and not a cloud was in the deep blue sky as the moon—which was nearly full—rose. The town appeared like a place in a dream, and again all was white—all sorts of subtle shades of white—and all was silent. A desert town, in which the roads are all deep, soft sand, is as quiet as Venice—quieter, because there is not even the sound of the oars.

In the market-place men were squatting about on the ground, talking; there were still a few booths about, which are set up and taken down, as a rule, at night. They are made of the stems of palms, held together by a covering of rough brown sacking, and under this little peaked shelter a table is placed, on which whatever is to be sold is set out. Inside one of these a quiet youth sat, his dark face lit up by the flame of a single candle.

Men in white garments passed by noiselessly; some of them entered a doorway through which a light shone out. We stood outside and looked in: it was a café. A figure draped in white lay along a sort of shelf, meditating; other figures, white-draped, squatted about among whitewashed columns. A hanging lamp cast a fitful light on to brown faces. One man was smoking a long pipe; was it *kif*, or some less harmful weed? They were all very quiet, and we passed down blind alleys and up and down strange passages, getting

glimpses of interiors that had always the same character.

With silent footsteps, like ghosts in a world of dreams, we retraced our steps across the moonlit space to the hotel.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PEARLS OF THE DJERID

THE series of oases that lie among the *chotts* and the sand-dunes of the Djerid district has been poetically likened to a chaplet of pearls; of this chaplet Nefta is often spoken of as being *the* pearl of the Djerid, *par excellence*: and with reason, for not only is the oasis very beautiful, but the three villages, that lie close together within its vast extent of palm-groves, are picturesque and finely situated.

These three villages, or three-quarters of the same town, are built on hilly ground, so that far finer views are obtained than is usual in a flat district. The fascination of the town, all white and pale brown brick, with its cupolas and minarets, is immensely increased, not only by a vast fortress—once Roman, then Byzantine—that crowns one of the hills, but by a view of the Djerid Chott and the infinite extent of the desert.

The architecture here is distinctive, both as regards the houses and the many mosques and *zaouïas* that enclose a place particularly sacred to the Prophet. Passing through a bold archway which had a square window over the arch, I was struck by the intricate decoration that surrounded it, composed of those thin, pale bricks so much used here. It gave a note of distinction to the archway, and the same decoration,





DESERT CITY OF NEFTA.

*London: Photolith.*



with geometrical patterns in brickwork, was observable on many of the houses.

I remember that I sat down on a stone bench that ran along the whole length of the wall inside this arch, in order to change the film in my camera. I was joined here by a fine-looking man, who asked me whether we were English. I asked him why he guessed that we were English, and he replied that travelling cost money, and that all the money in the world was in England! I tried to argue the point with him, suggesting America, and saying that two of our party were French; but either my Arabic was too bad or he was too much convinced of the truth of his assertion. He only repeated that all the money in the world was in England, adding (in consequence, I suppose, of this agreeable state of affairs) that he would like to go there.

I should have liked to tell him that Nefta, with its splendid date-palms and its woollen industry, was richer than many English towns of the same size, but he would not have believed me. People easily make money in Nefta, which cannot be said of all country towns over here.

Nefta was the Nefte of the Romans. Marmol, the Spaniard who accompanied Charles V to Africa and remained there for some years as a prisoner, says that Nefta was divided into three parts, like three separate towns, one of which had a Roman fortress. There were many people there and no police—a fact that seemed to surprise him. As a place on the caravan route from the coast to the “land of the negroes,” it grew rich, and would have remained prosperous

if the inhabitants had not revolted against the rule of the King of Tunis. The King took the usual course : Nefta was sacked and left in a state of ruin.

Before the Romans came it was lived in by the tribe of the Nazamonians, who were said to have been the subjects of Goliath of Gath, who migrated here from Syria : that is an *on dit* ; as Herodotus would put it, " They say " (two very convenient little words that one might use oftener). To return to historical fact, the Muhammedans took it by assault when they first invaded this region, threw down the walls, and demolished much fine decorative work that had ornamented the Roman city.

Nefta remains in the mind as a series of pictures : domes and minarets and wide views over the Sahara, the remains of old fortifications and endless groups of draped figures, standing or squatting about with the freedom and grace of classic times and the friendly inquisitiveness of the modern Arab. Whether the people here are pure Berber or pure Arab, Berberised Arab or Arabised Berber, or descendants of stranded Greeks, I should be sorry to say. They have the fine, dark faces and the wiry figures that one associates with the dwellers in the desert, and both men and women endure their long draperies with exemplary patience.

Herodotus tells us that the Greeks copied both the dress and the *ægis* of the African women for their statues of Minerva, the only difference being that the fringes of the Libyans were of leather thongs, while those of Minerva were composed of serpents. The Libyan women, he says, threw goatskins, without

the hair, over their dresses ; they were fringed and dyed red. From these goatskins the Greeks borrowed the name of *ægis*. " And the howlings in the temple were, I think, first derived from them ; for the Libyan women practise the same custom and *do it well*." (The italics are mine.)

We left Nefta with regret, and went our way over great tracts of pure sand, rolling away in billows, heaping up into hills, up and down which we danced, sometimes making three or four tries before succeeding in getting " over the top." There was some tyre trouble at one time. Owing to a tyre that burst because of the heat, and got firmly fixed in owing to the action of the salt from the *chott*, we were longer on the road than we expected. About six o'clock in the evening we arrived at Al Oued.

Al Oued is an oasis in a cup-like hollow surrounded by golden sand ; indeed, there are several oases round, and all are beautiful, with scarlet pomegranate-blossoms and peach-trees growing under the palms. The town is well placed on a plateau, and has some effective buildings in the market square, which always reminded me of a miniature Whitehall. They consisted of a long arcade, in the centre of which a sturdy white tower was capped with a dome over a lantern.

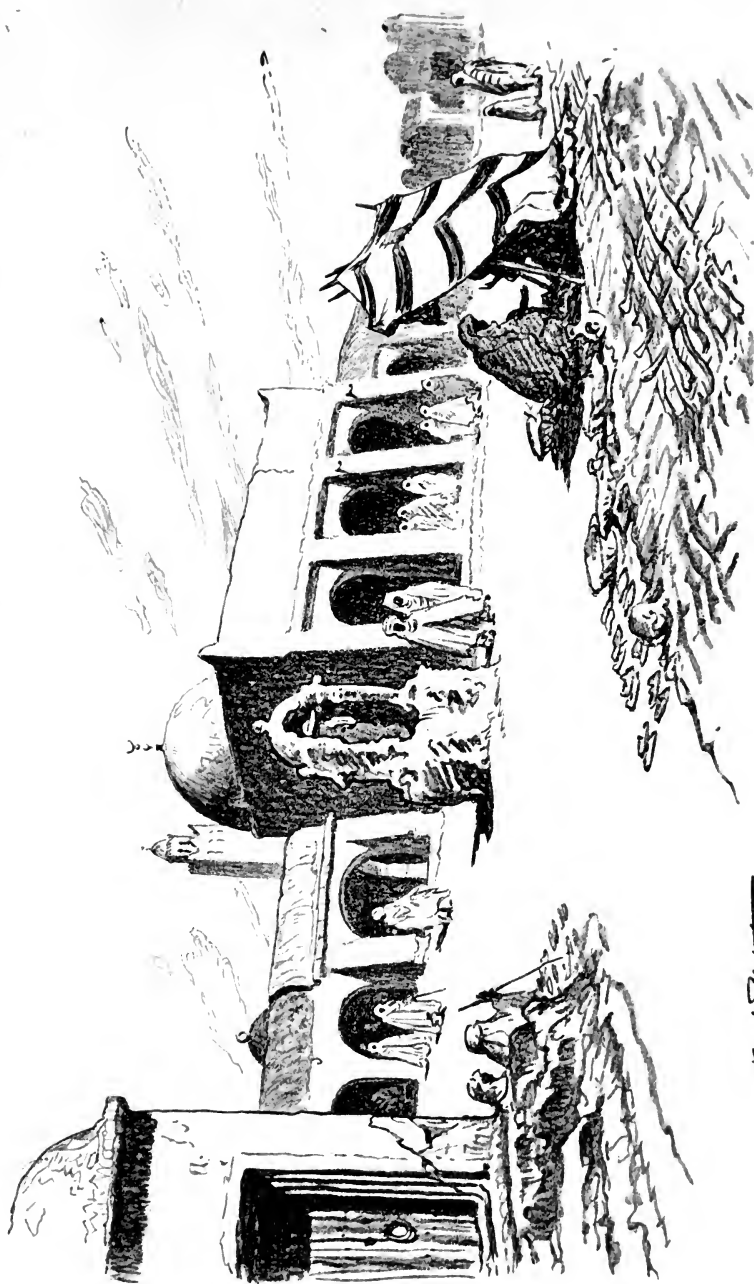
Al Oued is a station of the French Army and has some barracks, a public garden and an embryo boulevard, which was just being laid out. In spite of these signs of civilisation it must be a lonely life for the officers and men, who spend some years in these surroundings. The Transatlantic Company is building a hotel here, but I am thankful to say

it was not finished and so we were allowed to spend the night in tents. There is no doubt about it: desert travelling calls for camp-life, with all its freedom. At Al Oued the ring of tents was placed in a sandy hollow, above which one saw nothing but the sky; through an opening in the top of my tent I saw the moon, and through the half-open flap of the door the pure night air came with refreshing coolness after an unusually hot day.

Among the attractions of Al Oued was the visit to the Marabout's tomb and the ascent of a minaret from which we had a view of the "city of a thousand domes" that was most characteristic. Looking down, in whatever direction we turned our eyes, hundreds of funny little domes were visible like rather substantial soap-bubbles. Every little hovel had its dome, the result being quaint in the extreme.

All this wonderful country of sand-dunes, starred by oases, each with its typical desert city, has been very little written about. In the pages of old histories we read of perpetual fighting, of little interest to us now and with little power to evoke the past.

There is only one writer who has devoted herself heart and soul to the enchanting *pays du Souf*, and that is the Russian, Isabelle Eberhardt, who lived among the tribes, identifying herself with them until her early death cut short her singular career. The daughter of a Russian general, brought up by an uncle with liberal views who dressed and educated her as a boy, she came as a young girl to Africa, where her mother died, after becoming a Muhammedan, and was buried in the Muslim cemetery of Bone. Isabelle



*Arthur H. Weston.*

THE MARKET PLACE, AL OUED.





herself adopted the faith of Islam and passed most of the few remaining years of her life in the desert. Most of her work was journalistic, but she would surely have written a great book had she lived to fulfil her ambition. As it is, we have little more than notes which she would no doubt have used ; such as they are, they seem not only to give the colour of the country and the life, but they also turn back the page and give us pictures of past years. As such, they are of value to us in endeavouring to look back into the past ; even if that past is not very remote, she paints a condition that has obtained in the desert for hundreds of years.

Isabelle always dressed as a male Arab ; absolutely fearless, speaking Arabic fluently and being a Muslim professed, she had a rare opportunity of getting to know the nomads of the desert. One of the points that she makes in her writings is the immense power of the Marabouts. She frequented the monasteries—the *zaouïas*—where there are always guest-rooms, as the pious Christian goes to a Retreat, and she says that the charity dealt out by the confraternities was very great and the personal influence of the Marabouts immense. How far that state of things has altered since her day, a matter of twenty years or so, I do not know, but her picture of an event of some importance in desert life, written from notes that must have been made while it was all fresh, is inimitable. It must lose by translation, inevitably, but it may inspire those who love the splendid and arid land of the dunes to go to the original. She has called it *Fantasia*.

“Of all the strange memories hat remain to me

from my stay at Al Oued—the grey town with a thousand low cupolas, in a land that's archaic, ageless—the strangest is that of a unique spectacle that I was privileged to see one bright winter morning: a wonderful winter morning of those regions, sunny and soft as spring.

“ For some days previously the whole district had been *en fête*, because the great and venerated Marabout Sidi Muhammed Lachmi was returning from his journey to the far-off and almost chimerical country of France; a precious opportunity to dress up in brilliant costumes, to make fiery horses gallop in the wind and the dust, and, above all, to make the powder speak.

“ The day broke, touching up the transparencies that were rosy, evanescent, fleeting; dawn is the favourite hour, the best of all, in the Sahara. The air is then light and pure, a fresh breeze murmurs softly among the thick, hard foliage of the palm-trees down in the oasis. No words can describe the extraordinary charm of such moments passed in the great peace of the desert. He who has not opened his eyes in the desert cannot understand all the wonder that lies in the beauty of the dawn.

“ We had arrived the night before at the Bordj of Ourmes, about fourteen kilometres from Al Oued, on the road to Touggourt, in order to meet the saintly personage.

“ After passing the night, with a small circle of intimates, listening to the inspired, illuminating, and powerful conversation of the Marabout, I went out into the courtyard where our horses waited,

excited already by the unaccustomed noise and by the crowd which had been increasing all night as new arrivals rode up.

"There were there some hundreds of men, sitting or lying on the sand, draped in their festal *burnous*, majestic and white—energetic heads, bronzed faces, superbly framed by the snowy white veils of the turban, women draped in classic fashion, in sombre blue or red stuff, ornamented with strange golden jewels brought from the distant Sudan.

"Sitting round the fires, gravely and with the custom and the gestures of the nomad, the faithful prepared the humble morning coffee. They all wore round the neck the long chaplet of Sidi Abd-al-Kadr of Baghdad. . . .

"At last one of the *mokkadem* made an imperious gesture and the court was emptied and the gates shut. The hour to depart had come.

"The Marabout, dressed in the severe costume of green silk, with a green turban and long white veil worn by the descendants of the Prophet, appeared at the door. Gigantically tall, grave, and slow, he stopped for a moment, and the profound, enigmatic gaze of his large black eyes rested on the eastern horizon. The enthusiasm of the faithful left him calm and impenetrable, without visible emotion changing the expression of his face.

"In the midst of a tumult—the cries of servants and the neighing of horses—we sprang to the saddle. The gate opened wide and we were off.

"Before us four negro musicians from the Tunisian oasis of Nefzaoua, dressed in silk of violent colours,

let out a strange and savage melody on their loud pipes, accompanied by the deafening beating of a great drum.

“ Suddenly, from the crowd, a cry went up, immense, like the waves of the sea :

“ ‘ We salute you, Son of the Prophet ! ’

“ The shout was repeated with frenzy, and the tambourines, waved over the heads at arm’s length, beat a mad tattoo. The frightened horses shied back, rearing, foaming, and then dashed forward.

“ Impassable as ever, mounted on a white stallion from the Djerid, the Marabout, silent and with lowered eyes, seemed only occupied in restraining his mount, which he accomplished without a word or a rough movement.

“ At last the procession was formed, undulating and white, dominated only by the tall figure of the Marabout dressed in green.

“ Slowly we advanced towards the east, as if going to meet the rising sun, still hidden by the enormous sand-dunes that enfold Al Oued. After the paths in the blue shadow, we came out on the heights, where the golden light of day seemed to magnify our procession. The sterile and silent dunes now appeared to beget crowds. Whole tribes came down from the hills, rose up out of the gardens. . . .

“ Then a circle was formed in front of us, and twelve young men dressed in Tunis silk of startling colours burst into the arena singing a staccato and savage song, a war-song of the olden time ; they were armed with long inlaid guns and blunderbuss. Simulating an attack, they charged us with hoarse cries, discharging

their guns, all together, into the smoking sand. The terrified horses reared up wildly, prancing with their fore-hoofs among the crowd, their eyes out of the sockets, mouths foaming, endeavouring to back. Pressed on by the sharp spurs, they dashed forward through the crowd, which, undulating and yielding, opened for them to pass through. We might have imagined ourselves to be in old days when men's spirits were excited and dominated by war, which was their joy and their pride. All that is heroic, decorative and old-world, woke up in the silent souls of the nomads.

"The bitter and exciting smell of burnt powder followed us, maddening beasts and men even more than the savage music and the hoarse cries.

"Then, on the horizon, on the summit of a high dune, a white procession appeared, gilded by the eastern light. Preceded by three very old banners, green, yellow, and red, embroidered with half-effaced inscriptions and surmounted by balls of glittering copper, with tambourines held over their turbaned heads, this other crowd advanced, enormous and compact. Here there were no cries or loud music, only the deadened thud of the tambourines, beating out of time an accompaniment to a song in unison which issued forth out of a thousand throats :

" ' Salutation and peace to thee, O Prophet of God ! Salutation and peace to you, O saints among the creatures of God ! Salutation to thee, Djilani, Emir of the Saints, Master of Baghdad, whose name resounds from the West to the East ! ' "

"Near the banners, mounted on a great horse,

the brother of the Marabout, himself a venerated Marabout, Sidi Muhammed Eliman, an enormous, fair man, of a Celtic or German blond type, with a white face lit up by the pensive and gentle regard of his blue eyes—strange eyes to be seen between the white *burnous* and turban of the race of Ishmael, burned by the sun of thousands of years.

“The two processions meet and mingle. And, all the time, white figures of men and blue figures of women come from the dunes in innumerable quantities. I turn round and see, behind us, a moving sea of turbans and of veils, as far as the eye can reach, all over the region where I have come so often in search of silence and solitude. And all the time groups of men rush up and make the powder speak, as they gallop madly along.

“Over our heads we carry a tattered grey veil of smoke, and the soft, deep chanting of the people goes on, sad, like all songs of the desert, rising up and up to the pale azure of the morning sky.

“At last we enter an immense, open plain, strewn with tombs. In front of us the three dromedaries, which have been joined by others, step along without a sign of fear, among the crowd. Their riders, with faces half veiled, perched on the Toareg saddle, appear in a dream. The iron bells, attached to the saddles of the great heraldic beasts, tinkle at each step and their long heads, thick-lipped and strange with great soft eyes, sway slowly on their flexible, long necks.

“But, horses and horsemen, we feel the free open space in front of us and, leaving the Marabouts and the three old men to walk slowly under the shadow of

the banners blown by the wind, we dash off, giving rein at last to our bridles that are strained to bursting. . . . The madness of all these violent and sincere souls gains me also, and I end by losing myself in the excitement of the race. . . .

“Round the great Mosque of the Zaouïa the plain of Al-Beyada extends, deserted and infinite, inundated by a subtle light. Farther off, behind the inhabited houses, an immense nomad camp has been erected, a city built up in a day, peopling suddenly with black tents the solitudes of Al-Beyada, which form the entrance to the mysterious regions of the interior: Bir-es-Souf, Ghademès, the black Sudan.

“Down there, the smothered and cadenced sound of the tambourines continues, and from thence we hear the songs and the enchanting, modulated and soft notes of the little Bedawin flute, made of a reed. . . .

“Up here, a great silence weighs on the ruined mosque, on the tombs and on the dun-coloured sand.”

When we remember that it is a woman speaking, describing a scene in which she was not a spectator, but one who took an active part, galloping over the plain and plunging through the crowd on a high-spirited horse, it is really an interesting record.

Isabelle Eberhardt died at the age of twenty-seven, with her career as a writer unfulfilled. She was drowned in an inundation while attempting to save the life of her husband. That she often contemplated death we know, and she lies in the land of her choice, by the side of her mother in the Muhammedan cemetery of Ain Sefra.

“Under what skies and in what earth shall I be laid

to rest on the day fixed by destiny?" she wrote, only a few years before her death in 1904. "Mystery! And yet I would that my remains might be placed in the red earth of that cemetery in the white Aneba, where She sleeps . . . or else—no matter where—in the burning sand of the desert, far from the profaning touch of the invading West. What sad and puerile preoccupations before the great charm of death!"



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE FABULOUS TOUGGOURT

TOUGGOURT the mysterious, " the fabulous Touggourt," that was for so long out of the range of the ordinary tourist and even of the extraordinary one, is something like the other desert towns, but with great peculiarities of its own. The chief of these are the very narrow streets and the streets that are practically underground. Major Benton Fletcher sends me the following very interesting note on desert architecture, as exemplified in the three towns that we visited :

" The distinctive appearance of the desert towns is governed by the restricted choice of building-material available in each district. In many localities there is neither stone for quarrying nor soil available for making bricks—the all-pervading sand is useless in itself for moulding purposes when unaided by some binding substance. In places quartz crops up in small fragments not unlike sugar candy in texture ; it can be collected after storms sweep the loose sand into dunes which, through the medium of the wind, rise and fall many hundreds of feet, changing the contours of the desert as if by magic, and churning up the red sand which blots out the view. When calm is restored, all that is heavier than sand remains on the surface or projects through it, and it is then that building-material can be collected in unsuspected places.

" The town of Tozeur, for instance, is built on sandy

soil which is capable of being made into good thin bricks ; these thin, pale brown blocks are employed not only for structural purposes, but are also fashioned most cunningly into geometrical patterns in endless variety, for surface decoration on the walls, giving a varied, charming and highly original appearance to the streets and market-places.

“ If asked why so much ingenuity and time are expended upon the enrichment of the town, the answer comes that the ledges, holes and tiny steps of this rich embellishment afford resting- and nesting-places for the bird of the Prophet, whose sacred presence and song bring luck to the occupiers of the house.

“ In the oasis of Al Oued there is neither adhesive soil nor stone, but only a kind of quartz used for walling, in conjunction with the indispensable date-palms for roofing and general carpentry. The brittle nature of the quartz is such that it can only be used with caution, having to be freely buttressed up ; in consequence of this the rooms are small, usually square, with a domed roof over each compartment ; hence the familiar name of ‘ the city of a thousand domes ’ is altogether appropriate, for Al Oued stands abruptly out of the desert like a heap of pearls on an endless plain.

“ Arcaded market-places, well grouped public buildings, delightfully placed at the top of a square or on the edge of a steeply sloping plateau, give an air of distinction to Al Oued, not to be found elsewhere.

“ In strong contrast to either of the foregoing is the great rendezvous of the Arabs, Touggourt, which lies due south from Biskra. This town is quite a rabbit

warren, composed of narrow and very dark covered streets, mostly fairly straight, but having sudden right angles for no apparent reason. They are roofed over with palm-trees stretched just above one's head, the side walls, deeply recessed, having the lower portion moulded into long seats placed on either side of small, dimly-lighted doorways, which lead into the tiny courtyards of the dwellings. The whole effect is mysterious, for ghostlike draped figures glide silently through, leaving clouds of suffocating dust in their wake."

Between Touggourt and Al Oued lies the country that we had just passed through ; vast sandy solitudes, far horizons, occasional walled villages near which strings of camels, men on donkeys, women spinning with a hand distaff as they walk, and crowds of children, bring a note of life into the scene. To north the valley of the Oued Rirh cuts up towards Biskra ; to west lies an enchanted land that calls one, but which can only be approached by the favoured few. The land of the Oulad Naïl, beginning with a wide plain and rising up into a mountain between Laghouat and Bou Saada, is a region where a wanderer with a taste for loafing about among the primitive things of the earth may find much entertainment. Here Fromentin lingered, sitting in the eye of the sun, with his paints cracking in his paint-box beside him ; and here that charming writer, M. Emile Masqueray, passed by in the days of his youth. Among the essays that he put together under the title of *Souvenirs et Visions d'Afrique* is one in which he described the dancing of a girl of the Oulad Naïl in her own country, before

her own people. I transcribe it here because the dancing of women, who may belong to the tribe or may not, those denizens of the "street of the dancers" in Biskra, is often not only disappointing but rather repulsive to Western ideas. The *danse du ventre* has been vulgarised by contact with Western curiosity, but it must have had in years past some measure of greatness, of almost religious beauty, to justify the praises that have been lavished so freely and which we sometimes fail to comprehend.

M. Masqueray describes an Oriental feast—a menu of whole sheep stuffed and *kouskous* familiar to all travellers in the East. After the meal the revellers, men and women, but sitting separately, group themselves in a great circle on the sand and wait for the dancing to begin. Candles are lit and are put out at intervals; the moon rises, and the faint sound of distant drums and the screech of the fife break the silence. At last the dancer throws off her *haik* and begins to dance.

She is dressed in scarlet and wears a cuirass of silver; over her black silk turban two golden diadems are placed, with pendants hanging down the sides of her face. The heavy pleats of her dress reach the ground; she is decked out with innumerable chains, and her arms are covered with silver bracelets. Her lips are painted red, her cheeks are saffron with a tinge of rose. Her eyelids are blue. She is like a wonderful idol or a devotee at prayer as she stands with half-closed eyes, waiting to begin. One of the first impressions that she makes on the keen observer is that she dances without an immodest movement.



*Bentley's Illustration.*

THE STREET OF THE DANCERS, BISKRA.



“ Is it Pallas Athene, is it a Byzantine Madonna, is it a painted statue of the Acropolis, is it Tanit who advances towards us, gliding over the sand, to the rhythmic beat of the gongs, to the sound of the orgiastic flutes which rend the air? She lowers and turns her hands, reddened by henna, holding her head upright; her great wide-open eyes shine like stars. Her body, long and supple, by its invisible grace, lends a divine harmony to the stuffs that drape it; they fall and rise with the movement of the haunches, and the young priestess stands revealed beneath the trappings of a goddess.

“ When she stops in front of us, right before my fascinated gaze, she assumes again her pose of a painted-window virgin, and I can study her at leisure.

“ The pendants from her diadem are golden fish, the emblem of Jesus the Saviour; in the centre of her forehead is the cross of Christ; on her chin, chiselled of purest marble, the cross of the Buddhist; on her hands, the colour of blood, are the seven points of Solomon's candlestick and the five of the hand of Tanit; round her wrists the blue lines of eternal life of ancient Egypt. The marvellous creature is unconsciously consecrated by all the religions of the world.”

To west of Touggourt, just outside the walls, we see the domes of the Mausoleum of the Kings of the dynasty of Ben Djellab. This family has been mixed up in the history of the place from a very early date until quite recent times. The founder is said to have been a pilgrim from the west, but who he was or why he settled here is not known. Recently, many articles have been devoted to these rulers, in reviews dealing

with the history of the Sahara, but there is little beyond the usual story of blood feuds, assassinations and revolutions followed by drastic punishment.

The Ben Djellab tribe became important and their city, Touggourt, was recognised as the capital of the Oued Rirh district. As powerful owners of a splendid oasis and of a walled city, their alliance was sought by neighbouring tribes in the Sahara, amongst them the tribe of the Douaoua. Many of the stories told are connected with these two tribes.

Salah Reis, the Corsair Beglarbeg of Algiers, was of the school of the Barbarossa ; he arrived in Algiers to take up his new duties in the year 1552. He had hardly settled down before he heard that the young King of Touggourt, of the family of Ben Djellab had risen in revolt against him, involving various tribes in his rebellion. He resolved to put this rebellion down with a high hand. Accordingly, he started with a large force, was joined by the Beni Abbes tribe under the command of their King, and sat down before Touggourt, which he took by surprise, carrying off "an immense booty." He afterwards reinstated the young King as a tutelary ruler under the Turks.

Another siege of Touggourt is told in two different versions. Salah Bey, a very remarkable warrior, who was the Governor of Constantine, besieged the desert city in 1788. According to some accounts, he was successful after a long siege, during which time he certainly left his mark on the minaret of the principal Mosque, the Djama-al-Malekia, as can be seen to-day. The Sultan of Touggourt, Ferhat, according to this version, flew the white flag from this minaret and



treated with Salah, but the inhabitants of Touggourt have a different tale. Salah, they say, was unlucky in his weather, for it not only poured with rain, it actually snowed, a most rare occurrence in the desert. The year was afterwards known as "the year of the snow," and the troops certainly had a difficult problem to solve. They had only four little cannon on the backs of camels, their men were half frozen and the walls of Touggourt were strong.

"We repulsed the Bey," the modern men of Touggourt say proudly, "and the people of the Tell, believe us, whatever you hear to the contrary. Ben Berika, if he were still in this world, would be the best witness!"

Now Ben Berika was a Jew who made bracelets for the women out of two of the cannon of the Bey, captured by the Ben Djellab, so that his testimony, had he been here to give it, would certainly have had weight.

There was a period of calm after this event, whichever way it ended, and I find another story that illustrates desert life.

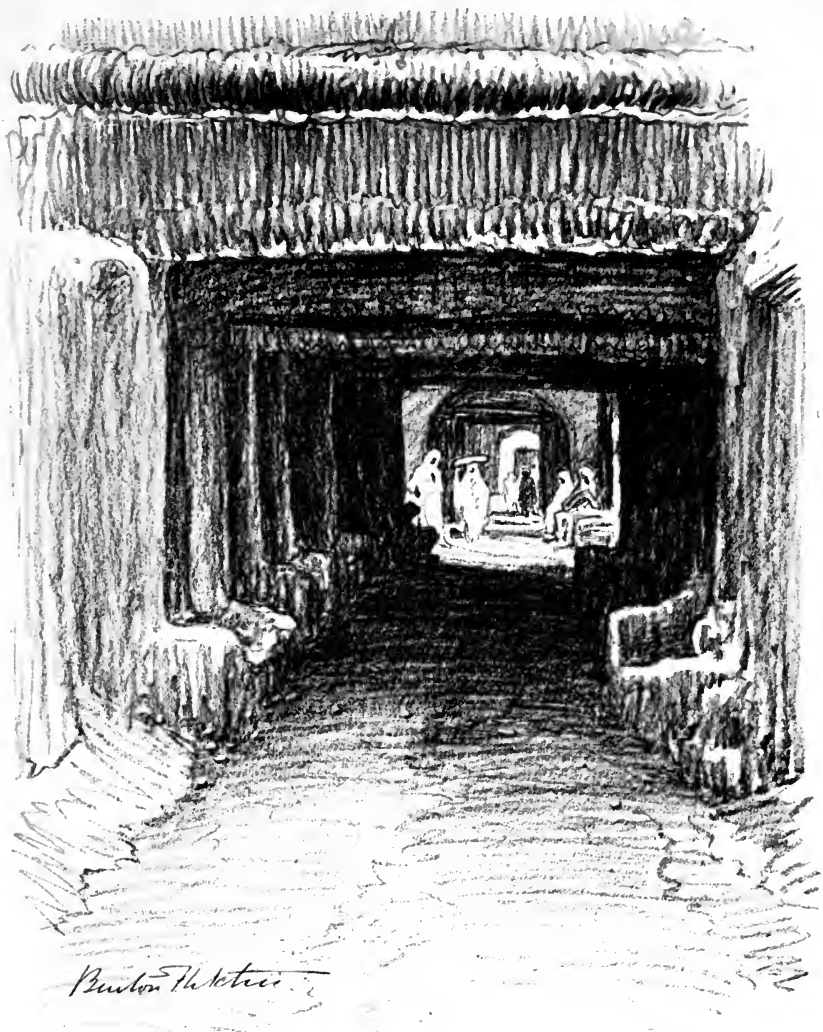
The great caravan, on its way to Mecca, passed near Sidi Khaled, where the tribe of Douaoua was camping. The Prince of Morocco fell in love with Aichouch, the young sister of the Chief of the tribe, and was affianced to her with great ceremony. As she was too young to go with him to Mecca, she remained with her people until the following year, when she went to Fez, where she was received with great honour and loaded with presents. Her youngest brother, who accompanied her, was given, among

other presents, a beautiful white mare called the Bint-al-Abiad, with saddle and bridle studded with gems.

Al-Guidoum, the youth in question, rode off on his beautiful mount, as pleased as possible, but, unluckily for him, he came on Salah Bey, busily engaged in organising the water supply in the oasis of Biskra. Salah admired the mare and her trappings so markedly that there was nothing for it but to offer her to the Turkish Government which he represented. Bint-al-Abiad, followed by thirty horses, each led by a black slave, took the road to Algiers from whence they were shipped to Constantinople, as a magnificent present to the Sultan from the Sheikh of the Douaoua.

The Ben Gana, often rivals to the Ben Djelab, were originally artisans in the Tell, who came into prominence after the marriage of a daughter of that house with Ahmed Bey; they settled in the Sahara and rose to some importance. One of the best of them, a certain Muhammed, who had possession of Touggourt, left his son to govern while he went to Mecca on pilgrimage; a month later the son, leaving a strong garrison in the city, went to Al Oued, where he died of poison. Eventually Muhammed had to return, and he gave five years of peace and prosperity to Touggourt before he too passed away.

But of all the unpleasant stories, and there are many connected with Touggourt, that of Oum Hani is the most bloodthirsty. This tremendous woman, who ordered the death of men with as little concern as she might have done that of a mosquito, was the daughter of Redjeb Bey, whose wife was a



COVERED STREET, TOUGGOURT.



Spanish captive. After the murder of Redjeb the widow and young son came to take refuge with Oum Hai and her husband. While there the boy was assassinated and the sister, to avenge his death, murdered her husband and then his brother, assuming the command of the tribe of Douaoua. For some time she ruled without opposition, and even intervened in the affairs of Touggourt, for she invited Slimane, the Sultan of Touggourt, to a fête, where she had him killed, afterwards killing his son and giving the command to a younger son of the Ben Djellab tribe. After some years of absolute power, a son of the brother-in-law, whom she had murdered, ousted her from her position as head of the tribe and she retired into obscurity.

The Ben Djellab always seem to have returned to power, even after other tribes got temporary possession of their city, and their family tomb is one of the interesting sights of Touggourt.

There are all sorts of people to be seen here, especially in the Suq, where they congregate. Black Sudanese and Senegalese, Jews and those descendants of the Jews who were forced to adopt Islam—the Medjaria ; Bulad Nail, veiled Touareg, called by the Muhammedan Arabs "the forgotten of God," because some of them refused to be converted to Islamism, besides the Bedawin and the dwellers in the oasis, most of whom are Berbers.

The Targui is a most interesting type. He wears a dark veil over half his face, which he is supposed to keep on even when asleep. It is a shame for a man to show his face, they say ; or, as some will have it,

he wears a veil to protect eyes from the glare, and mouth and nose from the dust—a purely hygienic habit. As the women go unveiled, as most women do in the desert, this is evidently a modern invention.

The Touareg is a Berber tribe, descended from the Lamtuna, the veiled men who carried their banners into Spain and were the first to found the Berber dynasty there. There is a tradition that this tribe was once Christian, and there are traces of Christianity in their laws and habits. The Kabyles, Mozabites and Touareg are all alike in that they have their civil codes and dialect differing from those of the Arab, whom they despise as much as the Arab mistrusts them.

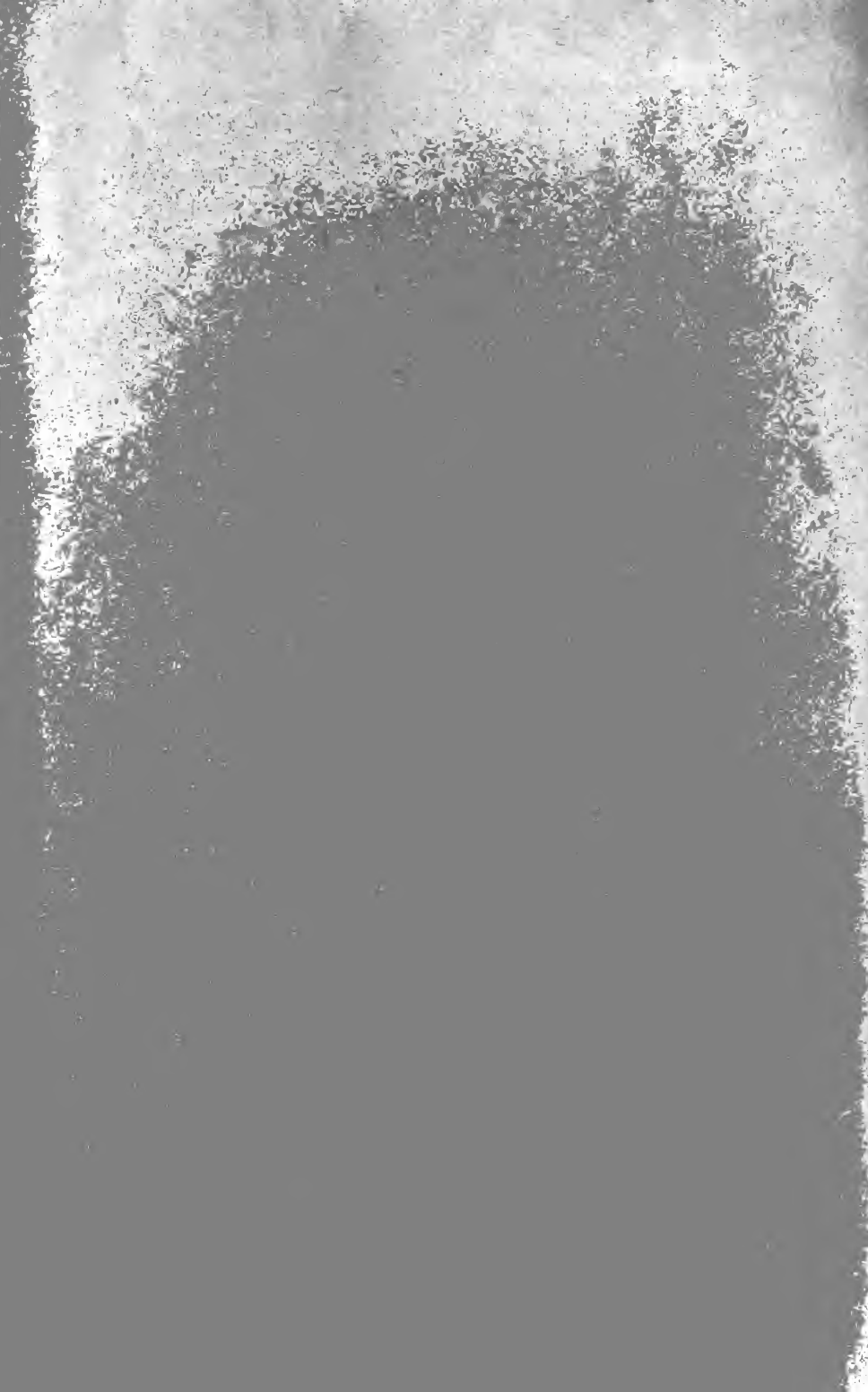
The people of the M'zab have public confession and absolution, the Berber tribes use the cross as an emblem, and they wear bells on their saddles, which was forbidden by Muhammed ; the Touareg are sometimes called the Christians of the desert. In spite of that, they are now Muhammedans, though not, as a rule, practising any religious observances. They are a nomad tribe, camping out in the Sahara, but have certain centres, of which Ghadamès, Rhat, Mourziuk, Ourgla, In-Salah and Touat are the principal. In old days they commanded the caravan routes and exacted tribute from those who used them.

In an interesting pamphlet written some fifty years ago by one who signed himself the sometime Curé of Laghouat, of which I had the melancholy pleasure of cutting the pages in the library of the British Museum, I find this little story. A Muhammedan had



*Hubert Pictet*

TOMBS OF THE KINGS, TOUGGOURT.





been to see the people of the M'zab and the Curé asked him to tell him about his visit.

"Ah, Sidi," was the reply, "I am your child, you are my father; they don't take off their slippers, they do not wash or turn to Mecca or prostrate themselves, they are absolutely like sons of Satan!"

Those who go north to Biskra from Touggourt take a gradual farewell of the desert as they travel up the arid waste of the intervening country. Looking back on the experiences of the past days a series of pictures will present itself to the mind. We can forget the dusty railway carriage, if that route is chosen—the best when we remember that much of the ground to be traversed is rather uninteresting—and the frequently dull landscape seen through the windows. We can see again the great salt expanse of the *chott*, glistening like silver, Tozeur enveloped in red sand or exquisite under the moon, Nefta with its fortress and those wonderful views over the desert, or Al Oued with the flaming pomegranate flowers festooned under tall palms and reflected in the water, Touggourt with its secret places, its strange underground world and its Tomb of Kings of a dead and gone dynasty—vanished cities indeed, yet replaced by modern towns or villages that have a great fascination of their own.

Biskra, which is in the military zone of Touggourt, is, in character, as far apart from that strange city as the poles. Of this charming, much-frequented winter resort we need not speak. It is well known, much written of, and has not enough interest as a "vanished city" to detain us. A Roman foundation, Vescera was an important place of old, and had quite

an interesting history, including Turkish raids in the sixteenth century. The most interesting monument in the vicinity is the Mosque of Sidi Oqbar, which contains the tomb of the valiant Arab conqueror. The mosque is old and simple, recalling those of the Sahara ; the interior, as we see in the sketch, is an interesting specimen of Moorish art, with the pillars, as usual, taken from some older fane.

The oasis of Sidi Oqbar is very beautiful, but the date-palms are not nearly so fine as those in the oasis in the Sahara ; it cannot be said to compete with the pearls of the Djerid.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DJEMILA

GOLDEN columns that form groups, made more striking by the rise and fall of the ground on which they stand, a great ring of dull red sandstone hills, against which the sun-baked stone shines out—such is the first impression that Djemila makes on the pilgrim. More than any other of the dead cities of Northern Africa, the latest to be fully excavated gains enormously by its surroundings. And the impression made by the whole field of ruins is only intensified when we come to examine the detail.

Cuicul, the curious old name of the city we call Djemila, is another place without a history other than that which was shared by all. Founded by Trajan, it is said to have been, at one time, a military station, but it appears more likely to have contained some sort of *dépôt* connected with recruiting. These charming cities that the Romans built so lavishly were not only intended to form a "home from home" for wealthy Romans and a civilising centre for African citizens who entered into municipal life, giving their sesterces to build temples and markets and theatres; they were also intended to supply the Third Augustan Legion with recruits. The great Legion, which was at first composed, at any rate partly, of pure Romans, ended by becoming entirely supplied by men of mixed blood, descended from Romans who had

intermarried with Africans or by those of pure African race.

Djemila emerged gradually out of the covering mantle thrown over the ruins by the centuries ; the site was first discovered by Shaw and Peyssonnel, the two explorers who did so much pioneer work in the eighteenth century, but it was not until 1909 that the *Service des Monuments Historiques* took up the work of exploration seriously. The result of their labours has been to bring to light yet another African Pompeii.

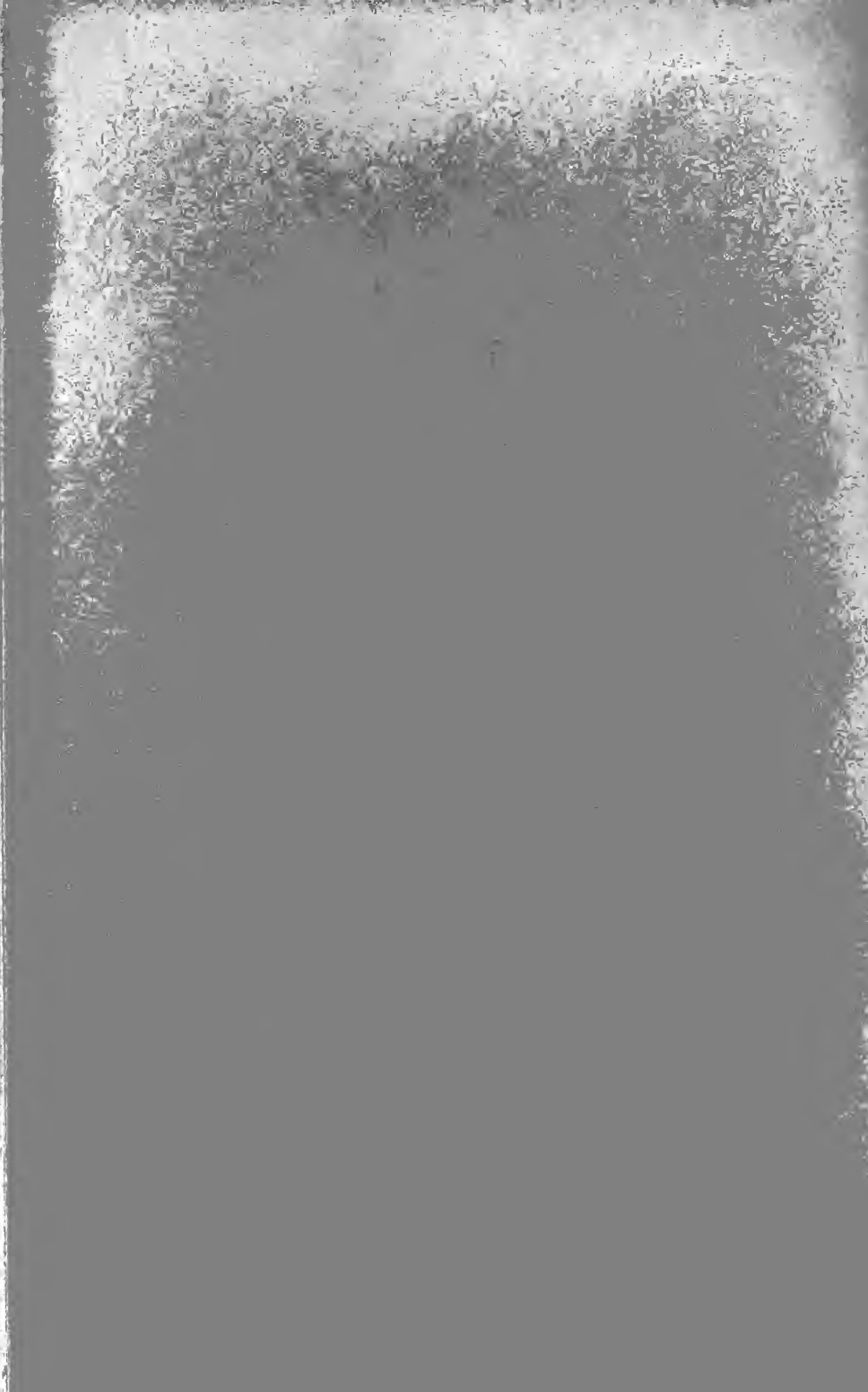
Djemila is not built on quite so formal a plan as are most Roman cities, and it stands on hilly ground. Unlike Timgad, which was built in a comparatively short time and was produced exactly according to plan, Djemila took longer to build and is rather more irregular in the general scheme.

It has, of course, the usual features without which no Roman architect, worthy the name, would build a town. The *Cardo Maximus*, with shafts of columns still bordering it, casting their shadows over the flagged roadway, is crossed by the *Decumanus* ; the old Forum has the usual public buildings built round, and is overlooked by the Capitol with the prostyle temple, that used to dominate the town, still showing the columns of the *pronaos* and the *cella*, with three chapels in which the Capitoline triad was worshipped. But the new Forum is more irregular, evidently planned after some of the buildings round it were already erected. The house of Castorius runs along one side of it, with the entrance in East Street ; it is the house of a rich man, with its two *atria*, many rooms,



*Benjamin Thompson*

ARCH OF CARACALLA, DJEMILA.



vestibules, baths—all built on the model of many of the houses at Pompeii. Another house, that was amusing because of a mosaic found there, has been bereft of its pavement, which is now in the museum ; it is called the house of Asinus Nica, because there was a design in the mosaic of a donkey, over which that motto was written. Other houses there are and shops, and a market rather on the lines of that at Timgad, that was also given by a private citizen ; and there is a theatre in a good state of preservation, with much of the scena and stage machinery intact, but it is not so fine as the Dougga theatre. It has a foyer and a promenade for the audience to take a stroll in between the acts.

The charm of Djemila rests in a certain irregularity and unexpectedness ; and some of the views to be obtained from the new Forum are of exceptional beauty.

It would be useless to attempt a description of even some of the monuments that make Djemila what it is : I can only point to the beautiful series of drawings which illustrate this book. Words, after all, are poor things when it comes to an attempt to visualize a large area, to condense into a small space the impressions created by many objects. It is not only the architecture of these temples and houses, it is the effect of the moment, the gleam of sun that lights up a bit of landscape seen through an archway, the ochre and russet of the stone, the vista seen down some flagged street, that gives a thrill such as no concise description of architecture can convey.

No one who has seen them will forget the noble temple of the Gens Septima, standing high upon its

podium, with the flight of steps leading up to the columns of the pronaos, or the great arch dedicated to the abominable Caracalla and his unworthy mother, Julia Domnia ; the basilica, with its three naves and mosaic pavement, the tribune for the orators in the Forum, the shops and the markets, the fountains and the sumptuous baths—each and all have something to interest us. The great baths on the west side of the *Cardo Maximus* have one side on the level of the ground, while the other side is approached by seventeen steps, showing the slope of the ground.

There is an interesting museum which is divided into five sections : an open-air section in which are many stelæ, outside buildings and inside buildings in which we find mosaics and glass cases full of relics of Roman times. There are some bricks exhibited with the stamp of the Legion, showing that some or all of the work was performed by the soldier-builders.

One is inclined to take each of these cities that are now in desolate surroundings as isolated centres of civilisation ; but there must have been a constant coming and going between them. With *Timgad* and *Lambæsis* and many others within reach, *Djemila* had dealings ; also with cities farther afield, brought together by the roads so splendidly made by the diligent Legion. Not only did caravans pass through these cities, but travellers used the trade routes for their own business. We also read of men journeying for pleasure when the guerilla warfare, which was constantly cropping up, allowed peaceful progression.

A case in point was *Apuleius*, the author of the *Metamorphosis*, popularly known as the *History of*



*the Golden Ass.* He must surely have visited Djemila during his long and rather wandering career, for he went all the way from Madauros to Cæa—far-off Tripoli—with the intention of travelling farther afield to Alexandria. While at Cæa, however, he met a fellow-student with whom he had studied rhetoric at Karthage; the friend introduced him to his mother, who was a widow, and Apuleius, who was young and good-looking, infuriated the friend and the whole family by marrying her. So angry were they, especially after she made over some property to her young husband, that they brought a process against him in court, accusing him of having cast a spell over the lady.

The family got together a reliable set of witnesses to bear evidence against this dangerous young man; they said that he kept a talisman secreted in his library, a little wooden skeleton on which he tried experiments in magic, that he offered up sacrifices at night-time in the house of a friend, and that he had cast a spell over the widow and had made her assign property to him: “Everyone in Cæa knows that.” The wife herself wrote, “Apuleius is a magician, and I have been bewitched by him.”

Apuleius went gaily to the trial and faced the music. He met all the charges brought against him in the most light-hearted manner. In answer to a charge brought against him of having spent too much time in personal adornment, he made this charming reply: “It is true that I have not been negligent of my person. I have used a mirror; I have combed my hair, and I have actually been guilty of cleaning my teeth.”

He won his case, and left the court with honour. After this episode he retired to Karthage, where he had studied rhetoric, and became famous both as an author and as a follower of Plato. From Plato to tooth-powder is rather a long step, but it is distinctly amusing to find that he wrote a poem to advertise a dentifrice. When reproached, he remarked cheerfully that it was not considered wrong to wash the feet, so it could hardly be criminal to wash the teeth.

The book that took the public taste of his day was one in which all his occult dealings came to the fore. His hero watches a witch who anoints herself with ointment and is changed into a bird ; he goes to her preserves, but he unluckily tries the wrong ointment, and finds himself changed into an ass. Only eating roses can put that right, and he has many adventures before he is able to procure what he wants. The rich vocabulary of this author, who was half a Getulian and half a Numidian, but who wrote in Latin, is handicapped by certain rather foreign ways of expressing himself, but the achievement in a foreign tongue is surely great. All this may have nothing to do with Djemila, but it is a bit of the life of the times, and makes one realise that the old days were not so very different, after all. The young man marrying the rich widow, and writing poems on dentifrice and fairy-stories when not occupied with Platonic studies, is extremely modern. He must have been a marked individual if he visited Djemila after his popular novel became known.

A city that was within easy reach was Setif, once Sitifis. Originally built by the emperor Nerva for

a colony of veterans, it became the chief city of a part of Mauritania that was called by its name—Mauritania Sitifiensis. In this modern town there is little of interest except the very perfectly preserved Roman baths, of which we have an illustration.

Between Setif and Constantine, near a village called Oued Atmenia, a bit of Roman wall was discovered, together with a fragment of mosaic; on further digging it was found to be part of the baths belonging to a great country house, and the mosaic that was found there was most instructive. The owner had caused the artist to represent on his pavement pictures of his house, his stables, his gardens; even his horses are seen here, with their names written over them: "Delicatus Pullentianus," "Titas," "Scholasticus," were some of the names. "Polidoxus" was evidently a racer: "Whether you win or lose, we love you, Polidoxus," was his legend.

All of which throws a pleasant light on the life of a country gentleman in the neighbourhood of Djemila.

If we can form pictures of life in Roman times, they are more difficult to build up in the Byzantine period, or in that of Gaiseric and his Vandal hordes who, though they did not spend the whole time laying waste the country, kept it under a sort of martial law. The inhabitants that had not managed to flee, and that had escaped the assassin's knife and the luck of the vanquished in war, must have lived in fear of their lives. Civic life was gone; the pleasant society of provincial Rome was no more. Gaiseric seized the vessels he found in the harbours

of Karthage and attacked Italy, although the Senate had acknowledged him as King of Africa. In 455, hearing of Valentinian's death, he sailed at the head of a great army for Rome, which he sacked, carrying away with him rich booty to the mouth of the Tiber by Ostia. Even before the Vandal established his rule in Africa many changes had taken place in the governing powers and in the ideals of Rome that had found an echo in the remotest provinces of that empire, which stretched far out over the civilised world.

One of the most vital changes that had taken place in Rome was the popular conception of religion. The old Romans were very much taken up with their religious observances, with the sacrifice of victims, and the diviners' art generally ; but the later Romans looked on it all from a practical point of view and it became more of a political label than anything else. We have seen that Scipio made much of his divine gifts and never lost an opportunity of appearing in public as one who approached the gods ; Hannibal, with no such pretensions, was also religiously inclined, and more than once made supplication to Herakles before going into battle. In the treaty between Hannibal and Philip of Macedon, made when the Karthaginian hoped that he had secured a valuable ally against Rome, the list of gods and goddesses to be appeased is remarkable. It begins like this :

“ In the presence of Zeus and of Hera and of Apollo ; in the presence of the genius of the Karthaginians and of Herakles and of Iolus ; in the presence of



*Bonkin Palace.*

THE NORTHERN TEMPLE, DJEMILA.



Ares, of Triton, of Poseidon ; in the presence of the gods who fight with us, and of the Sun and of the Moon and of the Earth ; in the presence of the rivers and the lakes and the waters ; in the presence of all the gods who possess Karthage ; in the presence of all the gods who possess Macedon and the rest of Greece ; in the presence of all the gods taking part in the expedition who preside over this agreement, the General Hannibal said . . . ”

There is no one left out. The gods who control fire, water, earth, and air are all invoked, together with the peculiar deities attached to Karthage and Macedon.

As time went on these deities were rather discounted at Rome, but not so much so in Africa, where the Roman hierarchy had been added to the three great Phœnician gods. The Africans were naturally psychic, inclined to superstition, given to the arts of magic. If they adopted the Cæsars as divinities and worshipped at the temple dedicated to the Genius Augusti, it was probably only with a sort of mixed feeling, supported by the Oriental conception of a sovereign being only just short of the deity.

Some of the emperors, if their private lives were known, would have tried the unthinking loyalty even of the people of Africa. Caligula, the vile son of the splendid Germanicus and his popular wife Agrippina, was clearly possessed after the severe illness that overtook him six months after he mounted the throne of the Cæsars. As a child he was the darling of the soldiers in camps commanded by his father ; when he was brought before them in the uniform that his

mother made him, including the high sandals, they called him Caligula—Little Boots. As a child and even as a young lad he seemed to give no sign of being abnormal ; it was only after this illness that he came back with a changed nature.

During all this time Christianity was making a little headway, but very little, because the religion that the Christians professed was contrary to the dynastic politics of Rome. To refuse to worship an emperor who did not believe in himself was a clear crime.

Vespasian, that good and capable emperor, the son and grandson of a moneylender, who had never believed in all these old stories of the gods and who was not in favour of the divinising of the ruling family, did not oppose it for political reasons. It was a power not to be despised. That he did not believe in it seriously is proved by what was almost his last remark : " I fear," he said, with some sarcasm, " that I am turning into a divinity ! "

Septimius Severus, a Karthaginian, whose native tongue was Punic, was a sovereign who did well and who did not forget the land of his birth ; he planned a far-reaching reform which conferred citizenship on all free-born people all over the empire. One result of this decree being made law was that Roman law had to be studied everywhere, and trials were conducted on those lines. Septimius Severus died at York in the year of grace 211.

When Belisarius came to Algeria in A.D. 534, Djemila was partially ruined ; as it was not a fortified place, he built a fort, but did not throw up those great



constructions that make monumental records of his passage through Africa. Basilicas were built of course, and Djemila became the See of a Bishop, a not uncommon position at a time when Bishops were elected in great numbers by Catholics and Donatists in the hope that they might bring weight to bear in the councils.

The hundred-odd years of Byzantine sway brought prosperity to the cities of the province so easily acquired, but there was never the directing force behind the rulers that there had been even in the days of the worst of the earlier Roman emperors. Whatever faults she committed, whatever injustice she tolerated, however cruel and vindictive a mistress Rome might be, there was a tremendously vital force at the root of her rule. When that force crumbled away the provinces were cut adrift, at the mercy of a stronger power.

The Vandals, of course, built up nothing. The great work of the Byzantines consisted in putting an end to their tyranny and in giving a chance to the persecuted Christians of leaving their catacombs and their hiding-places and carrying on their lives and their religion in the light of day. Had they made the most of their opportunities, instead of wasting their time in the endless squabbles between the Catholics and the Donatists, they might never have fallen before the Arab invasion.

If the Arab invasion and the devastations made by the Berbers had never materialised, we might have seen a far more perfect specimen of a Roman town in Numidia than we have now.

With the last rays of the sun shining on the great pillars of the temple on the Capitol, and lighting up the many columns and the paved ways of the street, all golden and rose against the darkening hills, we can only feel thankful that so much remains.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CONSTANTINE

WE have left behind us the sandy expanse of the Great Sahara, the domes and minarets of desert towns, the palm-groves of Biskra, the wonderful solitudes of the Aures Mountains, the gentler valleys and hills round Timgad and Djemila ; we are now in a region of romantic gorges and steep cliffs hanging over the beds of mountain torrents—the region of Constantine.

Constantine stands on a rocky plateau over a gorge that has been churned out by the River Rummel ; it stands aloft in a superb position, perched securely on a natural fortress. The town is cut in two by the Ravine, over which the Romans threw a bridge ; some remains of its arches are still to be seen under the modern iron bridge known as Al Kantara.

Constantine disappoints many people because it is a very modern, Europeanised town, in spite of its Arab quarter : but the wonderful views that can be obtained are unlike those to be seen elsewhere. They are really unique.

If we walk along the road that winds through the gorge, appropriately named the Route des Touristes, we can admire the strange prospect from the long curved bridge of Sidi Rachid to the fine suspension bridge of Sidi Mercid ; standing in the centre of the latter, we can gaze down into the abyss or on at

the ravine as it widens out, or to the left at the projecting elbow of rock on which the arsenal stands.

While we are in this quarter, we may walk along the Boulevard de l'Abîme and the Boulevard Joly de Brésillon to the Museum in the Hôtel de Ville, which is excellently arranged by the *Société Archéologique de Constantine*. Here, and here only, we shall find relics of Phœnician art and of the Roman and Byzantine cities that succeeded the old fortress of the Numidian kings.

If we wish to reconstruct Cirta—no easy matter in the circumstance—we must stay up here in the neighbourhood of the Qasba, where the palace of Syphax and Massinissa probably stood.

It must have been a massive structure, rather in the Egyptian style, uncompromising and fortress-like as regards the exterior, but we know that with the acquired taste of the sovereigns, who became educated by contact with Rome and Greece, luxury and even learning began to make themselves felt in the interior.

Columns of Numidian marble, decorations in gold and ivory, hangings dyed twice in Tyrian purple, linen from Egypt, glass brought by Phœnician merchants—all these must have been here in the days of Syphax in the Great Hall in which he placed, perhaps, the ivory throne sent him from Rome before he broke away and went over to Karthage. In such a room we can picture Sophonisba, dressed in her royal robes, waiting for Massinissa, and here she took the poison, making a brave end, as a woman of her race should. What thoughts had Massinissa, young

still and hot-blooded, as he rode away down the rocky defile, leaving to her fate the woman he had loved so long and had only just obtained as his wife? What thoughts had Syphax when he learned that his jealousy had caused the death of the woman that he, too, had loved, although his love was mixed with hate and a fear of her intransigent patriotism?

Massinissa was a hard-headed, ambitious and unscrupulous individual, who had probably no time or inclination to indulge in sentiment; after Cirta became his capital, he probably put away unpleasant memories. He never swerved from the Roman alliance, and when he died at the age of ninety he left to his friend Scipio Æmilianus the task of arranging his affairs. Of his three sons, Micipsa, who was studious and quiet, had the title of King and the city of Cirta for a dwelling-place; Gulussa, who was warlike, was given a command in the Roman Army, and Mastanabal occupied a position at the head of the Jurists.

Micipsa was a philosopher and a writer, with a taste for art. He beautified Cirta, collected works of art, and added the Punic books, saved from the holocaust of Karthage, to his library. Gulussa and Mastanabal died, the latter leaving an illegitimate son, Jugurtha, who was handsome and clever and gave his uncle a certain amount of anxiety. Micipsa had two sons of his own, Hiempsal and Adherbal, and when he found that Jugurtha was becoming too popular, he sent him off with a contingent of Numidian cavalry to join the Roman Army in Spain. Here the youth, who was despised in his own family as being the son of a concubine, distinguished himself

in warfare, was approved by his superior officers, and became the darling of the Roman soldiers.

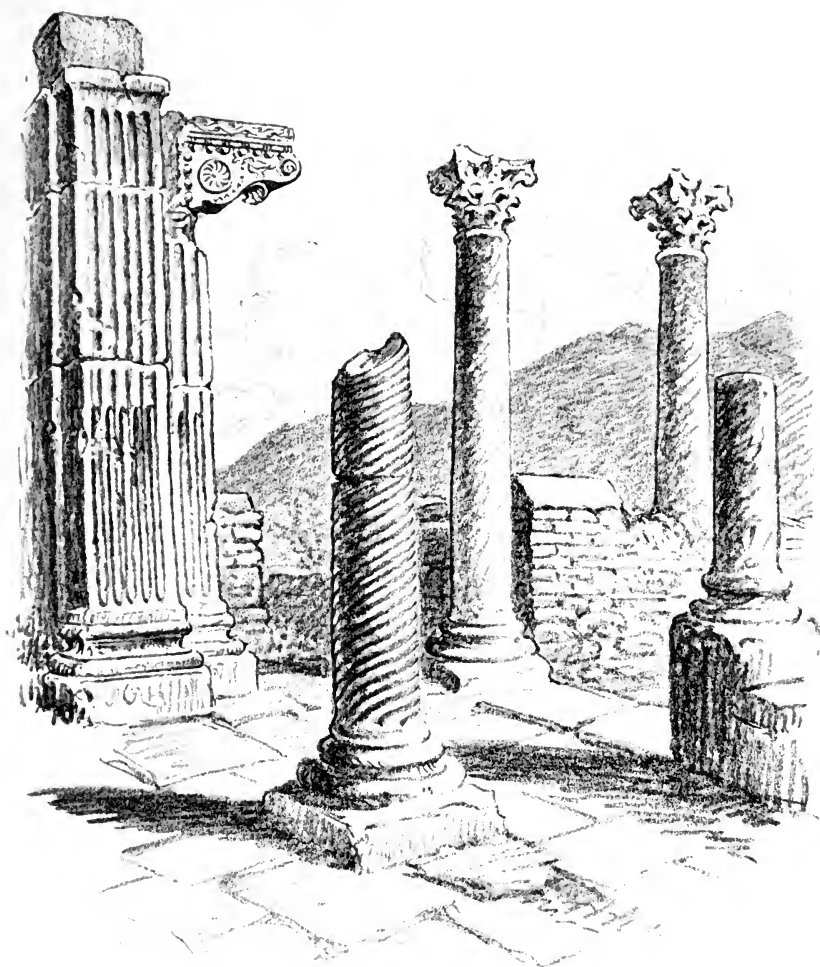
Jugurtha returned to Cirta with a letter from Scipio to the King in which he was much praised ; after this letter, which may have also contained a suggestion that he could not ignore, Micipsa adopted his nephew and left him part of his great domains on his death.

Micipsa died in the year 118 B.C., and disputes arose immediately. Jugurtha suggested that all acts made law during the past five years should be rescinded, declaring that the King had become incapable of managing affairs of state.

"I agree," said Hiempsal, "it is just three years since my father adopted you !"

A neat repartee that, in the end, cost the speaker his life.

Jugurtha caused Hiempsal to be assassinated, and the terrified Adherbal fled to Rome for support. Finding that he did not get the expected redress, owing to the amount of gold given as bribes by the agents of Jugurtha, he returned to Africa. Eventually he took refuge in Cirta with Jugurtha at his heels ; so closely did he pursue his cousin that if a body of Roman soldiers had not closed the gates of the city in his face, the affair would have ended there and then. As it was, he invested Cirta, bringing every sort of engine known in warfare to bear against it. In vain ; the natural fortress, aided by the strong fortifications, proved a sure defence. There was nothing for it but to wait. When the garrison was reduced to starvation, Adherbal was forced, most unwillingly, to throw himself on the mercy of Jugurtha ;



*Boulton & Co. del.*

ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE OF CASTORIUS, DJEMILA.

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being promised his life if he gave up the city, he opened the gates. Jugurtha's first act was to have his cousin tortured and then killed.

This is no place to linger over the adventurous career of Massinissa's grandson, so like his predecessor in many respects, but far more cruel and crafty than he. Jugurtha had the audacity to stand up against Rome, and was twice sent for to Rome to answer for his misdeeds. Once he bribed so magnificently that he returned in triumph, but the second time he marched in the triumph of Marius with his two sons, and ended his days in the prison under the Capitol, that he spoke of as "the bath of ice." His sarcastic comment on Rome will be remembered : "O venial city, and ready to fall if only she finds a purchaser !"

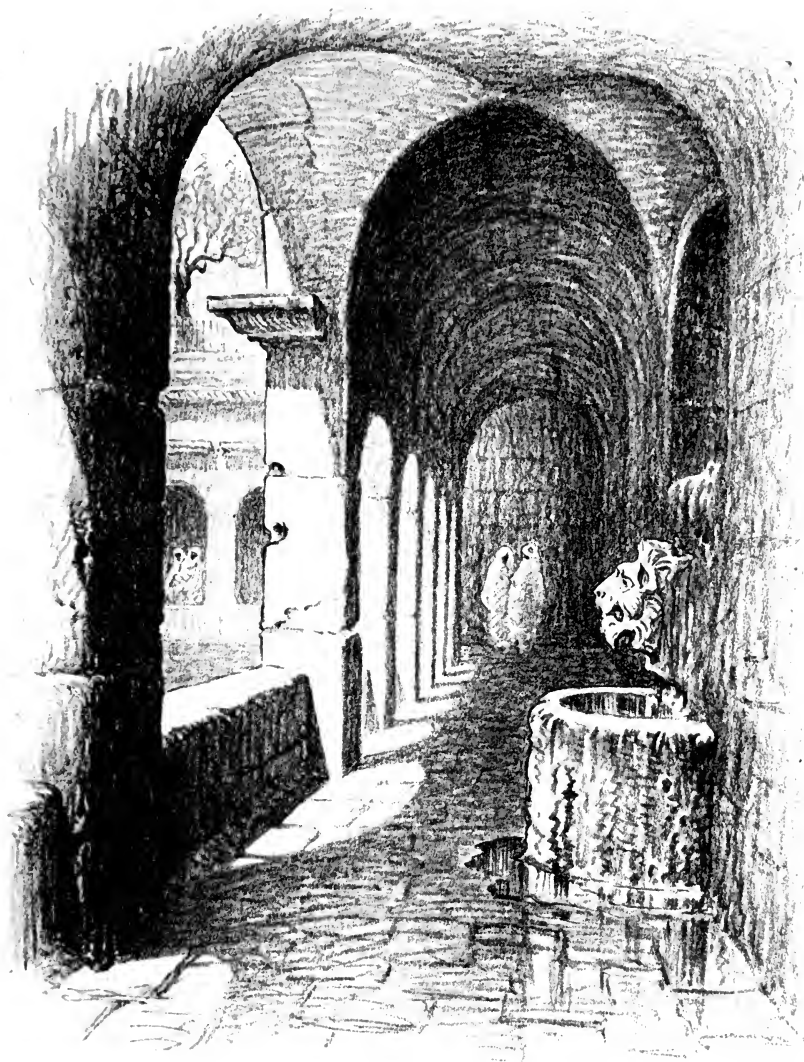
Cirta is associated more pleasantly with other members of this family. Hiempsal II, son of Jugurtha's half-brother, was the writer of many books and a patron of art ; it is curious how this vein of artistic talent descended from father to son, or, skipping a generation, from grandfather to grandson. Hiempsal II had a son Juba I, who supported Pompey in the Civil Wars because he had received many favours from him during his time of office in Africa ; he fled from Thapsus, tried to take refuge at one of his cities, Zama, was turned away by his own subjects, and gave up the game. The end of the African King was quite Roman in its character. He supped with his best friend, Petronius, and then, according to their agreement, he killed his guest, afterwards, with the help of a slave, dispatching himself.

Juba left a little son aged four or five, who was taken

to Rome and adorned Cæsar's triumph with golden chains festooned round his kingly robes. He was afterwards educated under the care of Octavia, the sister of Augustus Cæsar, receiving an excellent education. The little African kinglet grew up good-looking and attractive ; he was very accomplished, speaking Greek and Latin with equal fluency, and writing well in both tongues. Augustus took a fancy to the youth, and sent him back to Africa as a vassal king of Numidia in the year A.D. 29, the same year in which he was married to Cleopatra Selene, a love-child of Cleopatra and Antony.

When the young couple came to Africa they must have taken up their abode in the castle on the summit of the rocky defile where the Qasba now stands ; in it they made their Court, beautifying it, no doubt, because he had all the old artistic taste, and she, child of the intellectual Ptolemys, had a passion for literature and art. They were not destined, however, to live for long in Cirta. Finding that Numidia was becoming civilised, Augustus exchanged it for the kingdom of wild Mauritania, where Juba was ordered to carry on his work of civilisation. Juba chose an old, obscure town named Iol to be his new capital, calling it Julia Cæsarea, in honour of his Roman overlord.

Cæsarea, now Cherchel, shows in its ruin the remains of great beauty ; statues and capitals of columns excavated are often of purest marble and often executed in the purest Greek style. In the times of Juba II and his Egyptian Queen, it was a place of importance, the capital of all that part of Mauritania that then became known as Mauritania Cæsariensis. And on



*Bentley & Heath.*

ROMAN BATHS, SETIF.



beyond Algiers—between Algiers and Cherchel—is the great pyramidal tomb that Juba built for himself and his wife. Cleopatra Selene, whose head appears on some old coins, side by side with that of her husband, was evidently at heart an Egyptian; she did not forget the country of her birth, although she, like Juba, had been brought up in Rome. She called her son Ptolemy, and the character of the tomb that was destined to receive her ashes, though it is not certain that she was ever buried there, was Egyptian and Greek at the same time—Egyptian in its pyramidal form and the passages contained in the interior, and Greek in the classic columns that decorated the exterior.

Juba II reigned well and peacefully for fifty years; his son Ptolemy was sent for to Rome in the year A.D. 40. He had helped to quell the revolt of Tacfarinus and had been presented with an ivory bâton and an embroidered toga by the Senate, who sent an envoy with it to salute him as “King, ally and friend.” When he got to Rome, Caligula showered presents on him and treated him with great favour until, one unlucky day, Ptolemy, who was very handsome and beautifully dressed, attracted too much attention from the Roman crowd: the result of that murmur of admiration was slow torture and then death by strangling. In this manner and, apparently, without any ulterior motive, the rich kingdom of Mauritania became a Roman province.

Cherchel is now a small town with crenellated walls and a large field of ruins, only partially excavated. With its mosque with a hundred columns, most of them

of green marble, its curious Place Romaine, where there are still classic fragments to be seen, its antique ports and its baths and theatre, Cherchel is a place of great interest. The Museum contains some of the finest examples of Greco-Roman art to be found in Northern Africa.

Through three centuries Cirta prospered as the head of the Cirtan Confederacy, the other allied cities being Milia, Cullo and Philippeville, which was then actually composed of two towns, Stora and Rusicade. Rusicade was a Phœnician *comptoir*. Stora was, practically, the port of Cirta. Inside these ports the ships of grain used to be carefully guarded before setting out for Italy, and the service connected with the despatch of corn, the *annona*, brought many Roman families to settle here. The country house that we saw between Constantine and Setif may have belonged to one of these rich families.

In the beginning of the fourth century Cirta was destroyed, but was rebuilt and rechristened Constantine by the Byzantines, who also made it the capital of a province. After the Byzantine rule ended, a great many Greeks still continued to make it their home, and the Greek culture was therefore never lost. The various Muslim conquerors occupied it in turns, and in the sixteenth century it was made the seat of a Beylik.

Another very interesting town on the sea coast, Bone, the Hippo Regius or Hippone, where St. Augustine died, is now, at long last, receiving attention from the authorities. The excavations recently undertaken should prove very interesting. It is placed in very

lovely surroundings on the lower slopes of the Djebel Edough. Above it are pine woods and in front of it the sea.

Yet another seaside town which should be seen is Bougie, lying between the Djebel Gouraya and the bay that bears its name. Augustus planted a colony of veterans here, and the town was named Soldae. Its older history is unknown, but it figures in the Arabic histories because An Nacer founded a city on the Roman site that he named An-Nacria, corrupted in later days to Bedjaïa, and finally Gallicised into Bougie. Al Mansoni made it his capital and built a palace; one after another of the Muslim sovereigns have left traces of their rule in the town that was a resort of pirates when the Spaniards took it in the sixteenth century. Charles V came here in 1541, after his failure to capture Algiers. One of the latest events in the history of Bougie was the storming of the town by the French in 1833, when their victorious forces entered by the Turkish gate, of which we have an illustration.

## CHAPTER XX

### BYZANTINES AND VANDALS

WHEN that comparatively insignificant man, Boniface, Legate of Africa, sent an invitation to the Vandals to come to Africa in order to share the five provinces with him, he was making history with a vengeance. The events that led up to this act were simple in the extreme. Being summoned to the seat of empire, he was told that the Empress Placidia had resolved on his ruin ; to save himself he threw over his countrymen and became a traitor. There was apparently no truth in the rumour, but it served as a pretext for an ambitious man to seize a part of the rich province of Africa if he could not aspire to take the whole. His wife was a Vandal, which may have had something to do with his desire to ally himself with her compatriots. Whatever his reason, he sent the invitation, in spite of the eloquent protests of Saint Augustine, then Bishop of Hippone.

The Vandals, together with the Alains, had swarmed into Spain—a movement not of tribes, but of whole peoples. The King caused a census of the people to be taken, as they were waiting to cross over to Africa, and they numbered eighty thousand men, irrespective of the women and children who accompanied them. This tremendous invasion found Africa incapable of resisting it for long, and the Vandals were soon in possession of much of the country. It is true that





*Bahar el-Hind.*

BAB-AL-BAHR, BOUGIE.

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Boniface, finding out his mistake when too late, shut himself up in Hippone, and it was fourteen months before the city gave up, and that they encountered a certain amount of resistance elsewhere, but they very soon were masters of a great part of the territory that had belonged to Rome.

The King of the Vandals died soon after arriving in Africa, and his son Gaiseric reigned in his stead. Gaiseric was a small man, ugly and lame ; he spoke little and was a man of action. He soon made his power felt, was accepted by Rome as a vassal King who was to have certain provinces, leaving Karthage and the Pro-consular province to Rome. Having succeeded in getting his son back, who had been a hostage, he ignored his promises, and attacked and took Karthage in the year 439.

The Empress Placidia died, and her son Valentinian III, a weak man with a violent temper, killed his firmest supporter, and was, in his turn, murdered by Maximin, who forced the widowed Empress Eudoxia to marry him. Eudoxia sent to Gaiseric to avenge her husband's death, and the Vandal King, no doubt overjoyed at such a golden opportunity, started for Italy. Events succeeded each other with rapidity. Valentinian was murdered on March 16, 455 ; Gaiseric killed Maximin on June 12 of the same year, entering Rome unopposed on the 15th. Although he had been admitted into Rome without a struggle, he gave the Eternal City up to be sacked by his hordes for fourteen days, and took away with him an immense quantity of booty.

Gaiseric returned to Karthage in August, bringing

with him the Empress and her two daughters, Eudoxia and Placidia. Among the booty that he brought were many articles of great value. He had stolen the golden roof of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, many statues of the gods, gold and silver vases from the temples, and the sacred vessels that Titus had taken from the temple at Jerusalem and brought to Rome. He married the Princess Eudoxia to his eldest son, but the Empress and her other daughter eventually escaped and returned to Europe.

The Vandals were Arians, and Gaiseric was particularly keen on persecuting the Catholics; one of his evil deeds was the sending of the Bishop Quodvultdeus and other priests out to sea in a rotten boat; by some miracle they escaped shipwreck and landed at Naples. So cruel were his persecutions that the Emperor Valentinian interceded for the Catholics, after which Gaiseric allowed another Bishop to be ordained, a priest who took the name of Deogratias, probably to signify his thankfulness for the mercy vouchsafed.

Gaiseric was master of all Northern Africa. He gave the richest nobles to be slaves to his sons and chief followers, who took all the best land, which is still sometimes called "Vandal lots" for themselves, leaving only very poor land for the natives; this land was so heavily taxed that it was quite useless to anyone attempting to cultivate it, irrespective of its barren nature. The Vandals had their good points. They were apparently hardy people, despising luxury; they were, according to Salvian, less corrupt than the people they supplanted. But no one can deny their

cruelty. Bishop Deogratias had to sell the vessels from his church in order to feed the wretched prisoners brought from Rome. The African poet Dracontius, who wrote a poem that displeased the usurpers, was thrown into prison. He describes his condition in these words :

“ The chains wound me ; the tortures overwhelm me ; poverty wastes me ; I am covered with rags. People who knew me and strangers turn from me ; my life is oozing away ; my parents know me no longer ; my many slaves have fled ; my clients despise me.”

Having knocked the bottom out of life, the poet, who was also a scholar and a Greek orator, wrote a fine poem that he called the “ *Carmen de Deo*.” In it he described the wonderful dawn of the world in the Creation, the new life, the beauty of nature, and the life of man.

Gaiseric reigned for fifty years, and actually died a natural death. His son succeeded him, during the latter part of whose reign there were terrible persecutions. One after another the Vandals reigned in succession, but they weakened as they acquired a taste for luxury, and fell with hardly a blow before the Legions of Justinian.

During the ninety-four years of Byzantine supremacy Karthage recovered its old importance and much of its old splendour. The monk Salvianus or Salvian describes Byzantine Karthage with some detail.

“ Where are there,” he writes, “ more abundant treasures than with the Africans? Where can we

find more prosperous commerce—shops better stocked ? The prophet Ezekiel said to Tyr : ‘Thou hast filled thy treasury with gold and silver by the extent of thy commerce,’ but I say of Africa that her commerce enriched her so much that not only were her treasuries filled, but she seemed able to fill those of the whole universe. Karthage, formerly the rival of Rome as regards power and warlike quality, was she not afterwards her rival in splendour ? and in imposing majesty ? Karthage, the Rome of Africa, held in her bosom all the treasures of the State ; here was the seat of government and of all the institutes of the State ; here there were schools for the liberal arts, audiences for philosophers, chairs for professors of all languages and for every branch of law. Then, again, there was here a garrison, the headquarters of the army and a Proconsul, equal in rank to a Consul.”

Salvian enumerates the basilicas and churches in Karthage, some of which were dedicated to local saints and martyrs, but he is very severe in his remarks concerning the Karthaginians of his day. He describes them as being drunken, disloyal, lying, greedy, cruel, and perfidious ; as to morality, their passions were as the flames on Mount Etna. The oppression of the Vandals had been a scourge sent from heaven, which they had richly deserved and which apparently had done them good. With the Byzantines came reforms, and at the same time a renewal of the old luxurious life.

Renovated Karthage became once more a hive of bees. The Palace of the Prefect stood where the old palace of the Admiral once crowned the island in the

middle of the Cothon ; from the northern extremity of the quays the great stairway, with ornamented balustrades and over a hundred steps, led to the upper town.

A broad terrace, paved with marble, called the Platea Nova, provided the citizens with a promenade from which they might enjoy the fresh breezes from the sea and, if they cared for such things, the superb view over the bay to the double peaks of Djebel Bou Kornein. Then there was the Forum, with its porticoes, the colonnaded streets—one of which was devoted to money-changers and banks—and some broad streets which appear to have been planted with avenues of trees. The temples were giving way to the church, but the circus and the theatres and the baths, the clubs of ancient Rome, were all in use and recalled the days of the empire. In a place where luxury was the order of the day the baths were evidently of great magnificence. It will be remembered what Seneca, in one of his epistles, wrote about the private baths of his day, after visiting the elder Scipio. He had been surprised to find that his bath was dark and plain ; he comments on this peculiarity in these words :

“ Who would not consider himself a beggar if he bathed in a chamber the walls of which did not sparkle with the glint of precious stones? If the Egyptian marble were not inlaid with Numidian marble and surrounded by mosaic? If the ceiling were not panelled with crystal? If the swimming-baths were not cut from Parian marble? If the water did not flow from silver faucets? And I speak, so far, only

of the baths of the common people ; what will it be when we come to those of the freedmen ? What statues and pillars, supporting nothing, only there for ornament ! What masses of water, falling with the crash of a cascade ! We have reached such a refinement of delicacy, that our feet can no longer tread on anything but precious stones."

In the days when the Vandals swept the city clear of many of its abuses, the mixed population of Karthage had apparently sunk very low. Paganism was dying hard, and the painted priests of Tanit still swished their effeminate robes about the streets, and morality was at a low ebb. The Vandals were Christians of the Puritan order ; they did good in one way, while doing infinite harm in others. And it must be remembered that the Africa of the period of their invasion was also the Africa of Saint Augustine and many other saintly people. As reformers of morals they were useful, but in every other respect they richly deserve their reputation. Their rapacity knew no bounds, their cruelty was abnormal ; they laid waste and never rebuilt. They found Africa flourishing and they left it desolate, with its great buildings thrown down, its people reduced to slavery, and the Church of Africa—so important in those early days of Christianity—practically non-existent.

The Byzantines, as we have seen, were not great builders. They appear to have restored Karthage, but, as a rule, they were far more intent on protecting themselves from the nomads of the desert than on erecting fine cities. They even lived in hastily-thrown-up houses, with the remains of great palaces, that



might so easily have been restored, lying neglected to deteriorate with time. Their position was never really secure, but during the ninety-four years that they were in possession of Karthage the old Phœnician city enjoyed a period of prosperity.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ALGIERS

ALGIERS seen from the sea has a gay and alluring aspect. The Turkish town is said to form a triangle, with the Qasba as the point and the sea as the base, but it is lost in the great mass of modern French Algiers, extending for miles along the shore and climbing up the hill among groups of palm-trees and greenery. Under a blue sky and basking in the sun, with white clouds above and green seas below, such is my last vision of the city of isles—pleasant enough, and a contrast to the sarcastic opening lines of Maurice Donnay's "Orientale," written when the weather was unkind :

Je suis venu, pale étranger,  
Dans la blanche ville d'Alger ;  
Mais j'eus tort de me déranger.

The Roman city of Icosium, which replaced the Phœnician *comptoir*, has left very little trace in modern days, and the ancient history connected with it is far from being completely known. Whatever is known has been gathered together by the active Historical Society of Algiers, but, truth to say, the chief interest in the past history lies, not in Phœnician or Roman, or even in Byzantine times, but in the bustling days of the Barbary Corsairs.

After Icosium was destroyed, some Berbers belonging



The Coast of Algeria from a height.



to the Beni Beyramma tribe built a village over its ruins ; in the tenth century a new town was founded here and named Al Djezair Beni Meyramma, the Islands of the Beni Meyramma. It is evident that these islands were the attraction, forming a protection and a foundation for harbour works ; they are now sunk under the water of the great port, but there is a relic of Al Djezair that is interesting, and that is the jetty of Kheir-ad-Dhin.

If we stand anywhere along the Boulevard de France, that is built up on arches for a length of over three thousand feet overlooking the quays, we cannot fail to notice a projection, shaped rather like an anchor, that lies to the left. The jetty of that prince of pirates Kheir-ad-Dhin, runs out to sea and has, rather to the left of its centre, a lighthouse, which crowns the base of the old Peñon of Algiers, built by the Spaniards and partially demolished by Kheir-ad-Dhin, who used its stones to build up his jetty. To the right is the Admiralty, on the site of the house once inhabited by the *raïs*, and the small port now called the Darse, along which the jetty runs, was the pirates' harbour, to which they brought their loot.

In the evening of the 25th of September, 1573, a fleet of fifteen galleons brought to that mole a Spanish prize ship, *El Sol*, on which there was an illustrious passenger, returning on leave to Spain after serving under Don Juan of Austria at Lepanto. The pirates let off their guns as they approached, to announce good news to those on shore, and all was joy, except for the prospective prisoners and the men chained to their oars.

Cervantes saw the mass of houses, white as milk,

secretive houses with few windows, the upper part of the city enclosed within great walls, on which cannon were placed and iron hooks—though these he could not see—to carry the bodies of those condemned to death. The Gate of Grief and the Gate of the Valley, to right and left, showed up, and the great block of the Qasba at the summit of the triangle, and the domes and minarets of some mosques. How much did he see as the boat slowed down? Not much, for his emotion gained on him. Argel! the famous, infamous robbers' den, instead of Spain and freedom and rest after a hard campaign! The excited crowd of janissaries waiting to collect the King's dues, and every sort of rascal eager to insult the captives or to filch a share of the booty, made a landing in the harbour unpleasant, to say the least of it. The dusk falls rapidly in September; the harbour lights were never lit, for obvious reasons.

Cervantes fared better than many another prisoner, but he had a rough and weary time of it for years before he got his release; I do not think that anyone ever felt more thankful to see the last of a place than the great writer did when he set sail from the jetty of Kheir-ad-Dhin.

Many a delightful hour can be spent in the old town up by the Qasba, which occupies the site of the fortress where the robber kings held their state and stored their treasure. There are quaint staircase streets—the Rue du Qasba has nearly five hundred steps; there are picturesque corners and little streets of tall, white houses where fine sculptural doorways may sometimes be found, blind alleys that lead nowhere,

and a maze of lanes, running up and down hill, in which you can easily lose your way. Then we have the Moorish café, beloved of artists, and the Cemetery of the Princesses, with its three immemorial and sacred fig-trees for those in search of the picturesque. The mosques are interesting, and some of them are old. The earliest is the Djama-al-Kebir, the Great Mosque, built in the tenth or eleventh century, the minaret having been added by Abou Tachmin, the Sultan of Tlemcen, in 1323. The Mosque of the Fishermen—now called the New Mosque—the Djama-al-Djedid, was built by the Turks in 1660 ; it was said to have been planned by a Christian slave, who designed it in the form of a cross. The old palace of the Archbishop—which is a fine specimen of Turkish architecture—formed part, with the house of an official of the Government, of the vast old Dar-as-Soltan, the palace that stood in lovely gardens and that Barbarossa left for the Qasba.

The pirates' nest was attacked many times, the greatest event being the unsuccessful attempt of Charles V to put an end to piracy once and for all.

The Spaniards and the Portuguese had, for some time, turned their attention to Northern Africa ; not only because pirates waylaid their ships, but because visions of colonisation and of conversion of the Muslim population tempted them. One of the great men of the day, Cardinal Ximenes, went so far as to advance the necessary sum of money and to see to the equipment of an expedition in the year 1505. Mers-al-Kabir, on the coast near Oran, was taken, but there was not much result from this isolated success. In

the following year the fighting churchman came in person with a considerable fleet and took Oran. Pedro de Navarro, the Commander of the Cardinal's fleet, took Bougie ; several cities, including Algiers, submitted to the Spaniards, when their rule seemed established along the coast, and it was then that Pedro de Navarro built the strong fort he called the Peñon. This state of affairs did not last long ; the people were dissatisfied ; the garrisons were not supported by sufficient troops and money to keep an enemy at bay. Finally the Barbarossa brothers, Arouj and Kheir-ad-Dhin, were invited to replace the Spaniards.

When Spain acquired the riches of the new world, the hostility of the pirates was already lit by old conflicts ; their cupidity was inflamed by the vision of the loot to be acquired, and the conflict was certain.

To realise the tragedy of Charles V's attempt against Algiers, we must travel to Mustapha Inferior and Mustapha Superior, once a suburb of Algiers, but now incorporated in the city. Charles brought sixty-five galleys of war and four hundred and fifty transports, under command of Andrea Doria ; he had an immense crew, an army of tried soldiers, including the gallant knights of Malta ; he must have felt sure of success. He landed on the coast of Mustapha Inferior in a terrible storm, and made his camp where now the Fort of the Emperor stands on the heights above. The terrible tempest that raged during eight days did more to harass and distress the invaders than did the Corsairs, but between one and the other, the flower of the army perished, and Charles himself, with the Duke of Alba and others, only escaped with their



lives. The humiliation was deeply felt, and the invincible Emperor is said to have thrown his crown in the sea with the melodramatic words : " Go, bauble ! Let some more fortunate prince redeem and wear thee ! "

The miserable remains of the great expedition reached Bougie in safety, where they had to contend against shortage of food, but eventually were shipped for home. It was commonly said in Algiers that after this event " a Christian slave was hardly a fair barter for an onion."

The Emperor's castle on the heights, the grave of the knights, where the knights of Malta perished, remain as memories of this tragic event.

Fromentin, who lived at Mustapha in a little white house that he has described more than once, has a description of the view from his windows that brings the scene vividly before one.

" To the left, Algiers, to right the bay as far as Cape Matifou, indicated by a grey point between sky and water ; opposite me the sea. I see, in this way, the whole coast of the Sahel and all the Hamma—a long, wooded terrace, sprinkled with houses, sloping gently to the gulf ; a little plain, straight and long like a ribbon, binds it to the shore. It is a country of wood, fertile, damp, almost always marshy. One sees fields and pastures, cultivated land, farms, country houses with flat roofs and whitewashed walls, barracks turned into factories, ancient fortresses that have become villages, all crossed by roads and varied by groups of trees and divided by innumerable hedges of cactus and nopal, like silver embroidery. At the place where

the Sahel ends, near the mouth of the Arrach, one can see, when the sun shines on it, the white block of the Maison Carré. Nearer to the Cape, one sees sparks shining ; it is a little Maltese village called the Fort de l'Eau ; notwithstanding the fever, it prospers, several steps from the place where the fleet of Charles V landed and where his army perished. Behind the Maison Carré one divines a space, void and still, a great space where the blue begins and the air vibrates continually ; it is the entrance to the Mitidja. Lastly, quite in the distance, in the east, the dentilated chain of the ever-blue Kabyl Mountains, shuts in, with a sure sense of design, this magnificent horizon of forty leagues."

Fromentin is one of those writers who becomes identified with the place he describes, who becomes a part of its life. We see him in the little white house at Mustapha and we follow his adventure in Blida with interest, and without a doubt that what he describes is true in the spirit if not in the letter.

Blida, beautiful city placed among orange and lemon groves, called "the Prostitute" by the Arabs, or "the Rose" by some, is the scene of one of Fromentin's idylls. Did he ever, in company with his Arabised friend, sit for long hours in the rooms of the silent Haoua, the woman who was like the perfume of a flower, who had a musical voice and who lived in a backwater between a violent past and a tragic death ? We do not know, but the curious picture of the still, silent woman, living alone with the servants and visited only by her woman friend and these two strange Rouns, is particularly fascinating.

It is evening and the sun is just disappearing behind the roof of the courtyard opposite her rooms ; it lights up Haoua's room, it filters, in fine gold dust, through the thin muslin of the curtain drawn over the door. We can almost see her, sitting on her divan in the corner, playing with a fan or smoking, covered with garlands of flowers like a Madonna, indifferent to the affairs of this or any other world, with life slipping away from her unconsciously, irrevocably.

Blida was founded in the sixteenth century by Kheir-ad-Dhin, for the Moors who came from Spain. They cultivated the orange and the lemon groves as they had done in Andalusia, and were famous for leather work. During the later Turkish *régime*, it became known as a place of pleasure.

Ourida, the little rose, is not only situated among olives and orange plantations, it is within easy distance of some of the finest scenery in Northern Africa, such as the gorges of the Chiffra.

Before going back to Algiers, we must not fail to walk in the Horticultural Gardens of the Hamma, where Charles disembarked his troops and where avenues of palm-trees, figs, and bamboos make a pleasant shade ; we must also visit Mustapha Superior, where the museum offers us the opportunity of seeing many works of art that belonged to Latin Africa. The celebrated Venus of Cherchel is here with other statues from the same place, which must have come from Juba's royal palace ; there are relics of Roman and Christian times and a very fine collection of Muslim art.

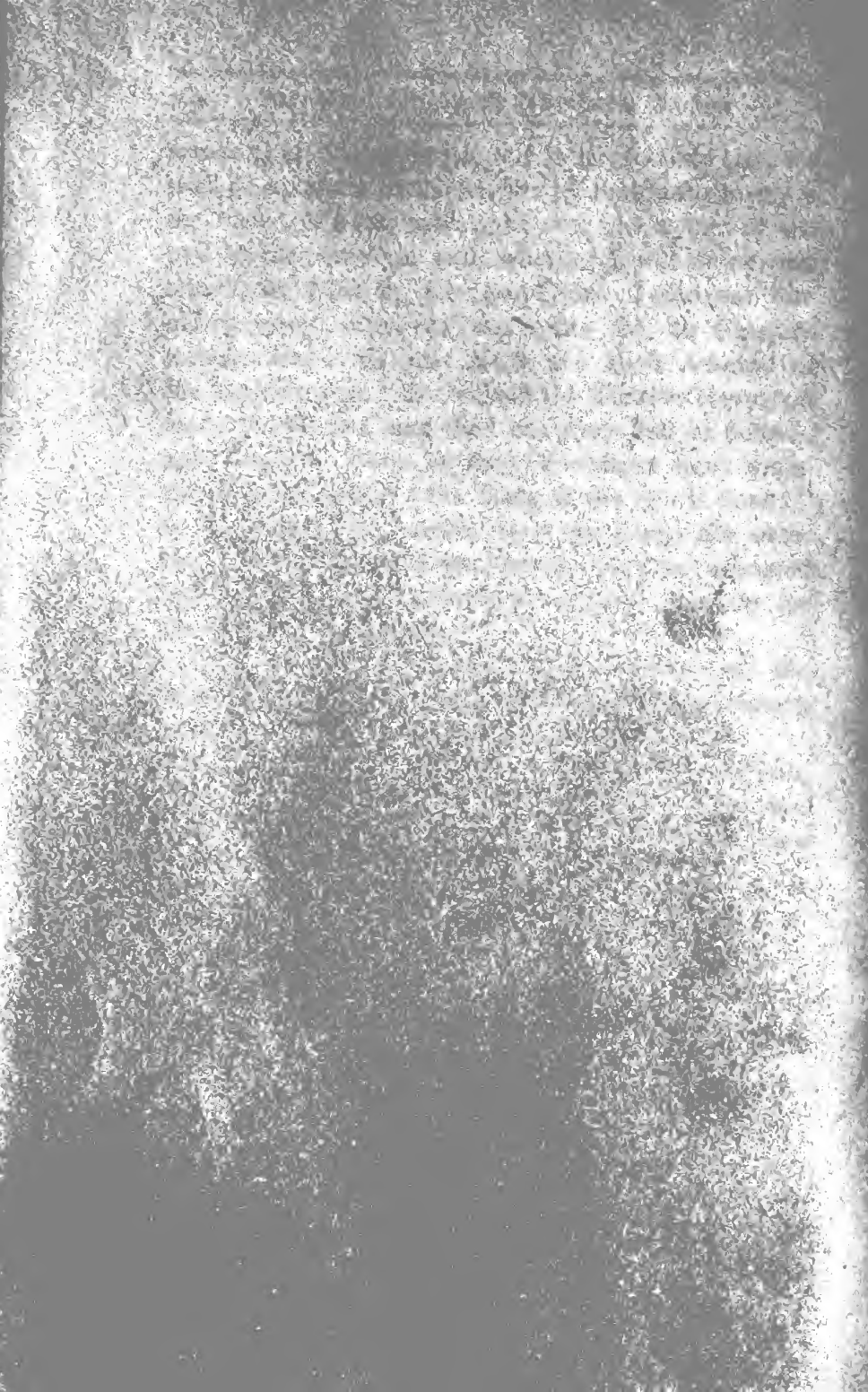
And in Algiers itself there is many a mosque and

*zaouïa* that is of interest, but it is probable that we shall go up again to the heights by the Qasba to enjoy the view. We can look right over the waters of the bay to the open sea and, whether I will or no, my mind goes back to Kheir-ad-Dhin. I can see him sailing away, when he was quite old, to Constantinople, where he was made the High Admiral of the Turkish fleet. He trained the Turkish Navy and made it effective, and died out there full of honour, aged ninety. When he died, a whisper went round the Barbary coast, "the King of the Sea is dead!" It seemed hardly possible that the hardy old sailor should have gone, and the Turkish Navy never passed his grave for years afterwards without a prayer for their first great admiral.

Looking away from the sea we can make out the distant range of the Kabyl Mountains, while beneath us, all Algiers slopes downwards to the bay.

It is a wonderful country, this land of Moghrib, with infinite possibilities and with golden memories. We wish it well as we, also, leave the crowded quays of Algiers for another land.















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